

Town of Ossining, New York Stormwater Management Program Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination

Illicit Discharges are substances which find their way into waterways and storm drains, either by accident or deliberately, decrease water quality and create unsightly conditions. Carelessly discarded trash, illegal connections of waste water and other products, household chemicals, oil, and nutrients from over fertilization of lawns can be washed into drains when it rains and eventually end up in the Hudson River. In 2007, the Town of Ossining began a program to locate and identify illicit discharges and take enforcement action where appropriate.

Examples of Pollution in Stormwater and their impact:

- Nutrients such as nitrogen can promote the overgrowth of algae, deplete oxygen in the waterway and be harmful to other aquatic life.
- Bacteria from animal wastes and illicit connections to sewerage systems can make lakes and streams unattractive and capable of generating odors.
- Oil and grease from automobiles and illegal dumping causes sheen and odor and makes transfer of oxygen difficult for aquatic organisms.
- Sediment from construction activities clouds waterways and interferes with the habitat of living things that depend upon those waters.
- Careless application of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers affect the health of living organisms and cause ecosystem imbalances.
- Litter damages aquatic life, introduces chemical pollution, and diminishes the beauty of our waterways.

How can residents and businesses help the Town in fighting illicit discharges:

- Cleanup after pets both in your yard, along sidewalks and streets, in parks and along the waterfront.
- Insure that lawn clippings are either mulched in place on your lawn or disposed of with the Town's Yard Waste Collection Program. Note: grass clippings **are not** part of the Town's Yard Waste Collection Program.
- If you observe illegal activity such as dumping of trash or oil, household goods or construction debris, note the vehicle license number and description as well as the location (street address if possible) where the material was dumped and alert the Police Department.
- Get together with a group of neighbors and perform a "neighborhood cleanup" one or two days a year and dispose of the materials collected either as trash or recyclables.
- Alert the Town if you observe discolored water, an oil sheen, or unusual odors in streams, lakes and storm drains or at drainage pipes.

Who do I call if I observe any type of illicit discharge:

- Residents may contact the Building Inspector John Hamilton at 762-8419 or the Superintendent of Highways, Michael G. O'Connor at 914-941-2241