

A Guide to Illicit Stormwater Discharges

What Is An Illicit Discharge?

An illicit discharge is drainage of anything other than natural precipitation to the Augusta-Richmond County (ARC) storm drain system. Because storm drains discharge directly to nearby streams untreated, illicit discharges may contaminate waterways by adversely changing the water's physical, chemical or biological properties, including temperature, taste, color, clarity, odor, or by introducing hazardous liquids, gases, or solids into the streams.



What Are Some Examples of Illicit Discharges?

Some common types of illicit discharges include:

- Sewage and septic flows from sewer pipes or septic systems
- Connections of domestic or commercial sinks or washers to storm drains
- Disposal of liquid wastes such as paint, gasoline, oil, radiator fluid, grease, treated swimming pool water, detergents, and most other non-storm water liquids
- Tap water leaks to the storm drain (chlorine is harmful to the environment)
- Runoff of pesticides and herbicides

Are There Any Exceptions?

Yes – several types of discharges may be drained to the storm drain system, including:

- Unpolluted industrial cooling water, but only if the discharge does not raise the temperature of the receiving stream more than 5°F.
- Water line flushing performed by a government agency
- Diverted stream flows, rising ground waters, and unpolluted ground water infiltration
- Unpolluted pumped ground water



- Discharges from un-chlorinated potable water sources, foundation drains, air conditioning condensation, irrigation water springs, water from crawl space pumps, footing drains, and lawn watering
- Individual residential car washing
- Flows from riparian habitats and wetlands
- Street wash water
- Discharges or flows from fire fighting



How Are Illicit Discharges Regulated?

Several federal, state, and local regulations and regulatory agencies govern storm water systems. These include the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Clean Water Act amendments of 1987, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) and state-issued National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, and the Augusta Engineering Department.



What Can You Do?

Be vigilant for anything that does not appear to belong in the storm drain system flowing into it. If it does not look or smell like natural rain water, it probably isn't. If you see suspicious discharges, please report them to *Augusta Cares* at 706-821-2300.

If you have any questions, contact the

Augusta Engineering Department

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Phone: 706-821-1706