

Protecting Our Water Quality

What is Stormwater?

The term stormwater refers to surface water that flows across the land into creeks, rivers, and lakes. When it rains, stormwater runoff picks up pollutants such as litter, fertilizer, pesticides, grass clippings, or pet waste and carries them to the storm drain. Storm drains convey water directly into our waterways without any treatment or filtration. It will eventually find its way to area lakes, which are the primary water supply for most cities in Texas. Stormwater from our community drains to Lake Lavon.



Our community is required to comply with environmental regulations established by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). We are required to develop a Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) and to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect water quality. The TCEQ permit requires that our SWMP include practices in six categories:

- Public Education and Outreach
- Public Involvement/Participation
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
- Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control
- Post-Construction Stormwater Management
- Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations

A copy of our SWMP may be downloaded from [Collin County Water Control and Improvement District No. 3](#) website.

Sources of Stormwater Pollution

Pollution comes from a wide variety of sources such as litter, pet waste, and yard waste. This means that each one of us can have a huge impact on surface water quality in our community and for our neighbors downstream.

Pet Waste

Improperly disposed pet waste can be washed into storm drains by rainfall or the runoff from sprinklers and other landscape watering. Our storm drains go into Lake Lavon, carrying pollutants along with the water. This water DOES NOT go through a treatment process.

Pet waste in the water increases bacteria levels, which can cause gastrointestinal problems and skin reactions, making the water unsafe for swimming and other activities. Pet waste also uses up the available oxygen for aquatic life and may release harmful ammonia into the water. Low oxygen levels and ammonia, combined with warm temperatures, can cause a fish kill. Pet waste also contains nutrients that stimulate weed and algae growth. See the [North Central Texas Council of Governments Pet Waste webpage](#) to learn more about how to properly dispose of pet waste.

Yard Waste

Grass clippings, tree leaves, and other yard waste are natural but can still pollute our local waterways. As yard waste breaks down or decomposes in a local waterway or lake, it depletes the oxygen in the water. Fertilizers can also cause a significant impact when applied incorrectly. Learn more about the proper way to apply fertilizers by reading AgriLife's [Lawn Fertilization for Texas Warm Season Grasses \(PDF\)](#). Visit the [North Central Texas Council of Governments Yard Waste webpage](#) to learn other yard care techniques.



What is Illicit Discharge?

Anything entering our storm sewer system that is not 100% storm water is an illicit (i.e., illegal) discharge. To protect the quality of our streams and public health, we encourage you to report illicit discharges.

Common Examples of Illicit Discharge

- Chlorinated backwash and draining associated with swimming pools
- Fats, oils, and grease from residential or commercial cooking activities
- Fertilizers, pesticides, lawn/landscape waste
- Household toxins
- Industrial discharges
- Oil, anti-freeze, paint, cleaning fluids
- Sanitary sewer discharges

See the [North Texas Defend Your Drains webpage](#) for guidance on how to properly dispose of fats, oils, and grease (FOG). Report stormwater pollution or dumping of pollutants into stormwater drains with our [online form](#).

