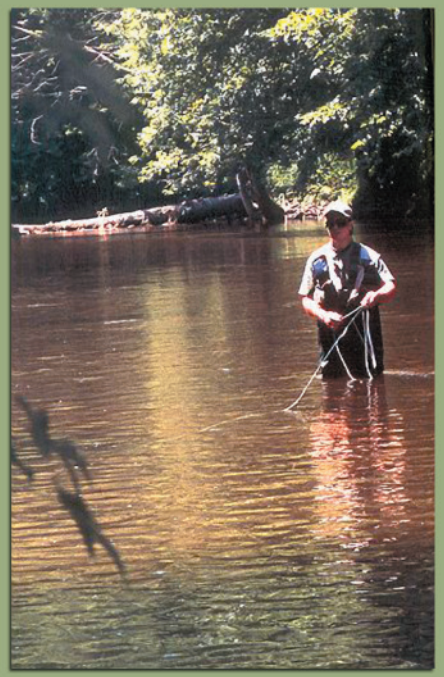
Lower Grand River Watershed

What is a Watershed?

A watershed is an area of land where all the precipitation that drains off of it flows to a single stream, set of streams, or body of water. For example, the total area drained by the Lower Grand River constitutes its watershed. Watersheds cross county, state, and national boundaries. No matter where you are, you live in a watershed!

Lower Grand River Watershed

* Information for this brochure was obtained from the MDOT Storm Water Management Brochure "Together… Better Roads, Cleaner Streams".



Fish species of the Grand River, such as northern pike, walleye, and largemouth and smallmouth bass, are just one reason to prevent pollution of the Grand River.

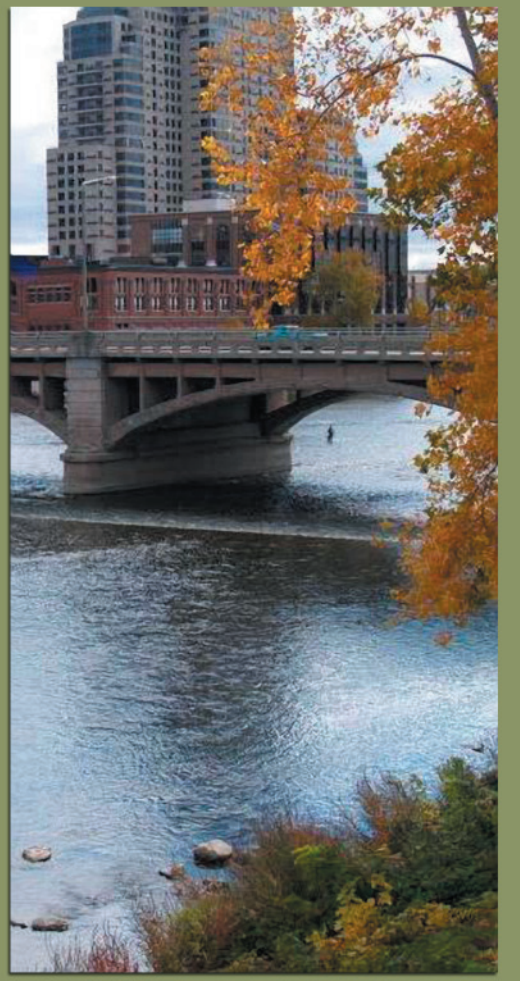
For more information on the Lower Grand River Watershed, visit **www.lowergrandriver.org**

Permits for Clean Water NPDES

FTC&H

GVMC
Grand Valley Metro Council

Storm Water Management
Illicit Discharges and Connections



Be Stormwater Savvy

Don't let a good drop go bad!

What Is Stormwater Runoff?

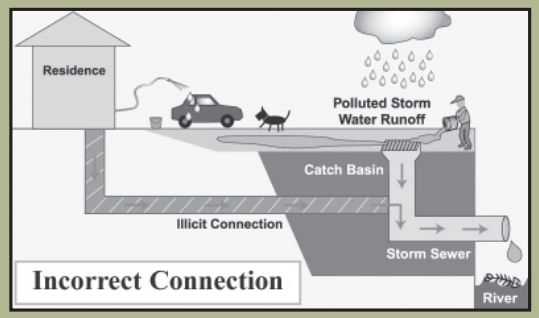
One of the most significant, yet unrecognized, groups of water contaminants is stormwater pollutants. When it rains, stormwater runs over yards, streets, roads, highways, parking lots, parks, and playgrounds, carrying with it everything in its path, including debris and pollutants. Eventually, the water will travel to a stream, either over land or via a storm drain. Storm drains are frequently located alongside streets and parking lots. Unlike sanitary sewers that divert water to a treatment plant directly from your home, storm drains lead directly to surrounding lakes and rivers without any type of treatment. All the debris and pollutants that were picked up by stormwater runoff, end up in your lakes and streams!

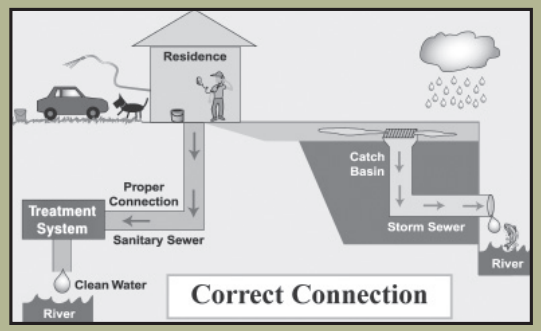
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)
Phase II Storm Water Program

The Clean Water Act of 1972 set up the NPDES. The NPDES program required communities around the country with urbanized areas to begin tackling the issue of stormwater pollution. In recent years, several communities in Kent and Ottawa Counties were required to develop an illicit discharge elimination program (IDEP). The IDEP was required to include an investigation of the waters of the state to identify, and eventually eliminate, illicit discharges and connections to the storm sewer.

What is an Illicit Discharge or Connection?

An illicit discharge is any discharge to the storm sewer system that is not composed entirely of rain water or groundwater. Examples include dumping of motor vehicle fluids, household hazardous wastes, grass clippings, leaf litter, industrial waste, restaurant wastes, or any other non-stormwater waste into a stormwater system. An illicit connection is the discharge of pollutants or non-stormwater materials into a storm sewer system via a pipe or other direct connection. Sources of illicit connections may include sanitary sewer taps, wash water for laundromats or carwashes, and other similar sources.





How Do I Spot an Illicit Discharge or Connection?

- Look for makeshift pipes or hoses that lead to a storm drain or body of water.
- Watch for stains, unusual odors, structural damage to streets or gutters, and abnormal vegetative growth in nearby lakes and streams.
- If you see an illicit discharge or connection, REPORT IT to your community. The Illicit Discharge and Connection Ordinance, adopted by your community, gives them legal authority to inspect and sample discharge, as well as enforce sanctions for violations.

How Can I Help Reduce Polluted Stormwater Runoff?

- Never dump anything down a storm sewer or drain.
- Take used oil to your local quick lube or auto shop.
- Dispose of pet waste in a trash can.
- Wash your car on your lawn so excess water, chemicals, and dirt are filtered through grass and vegetation.
- Visit the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) web site to find out more about stormwater runoff: www.michigan.gov/deq

Call your Community to Report Illegal Discharges and Connections!