

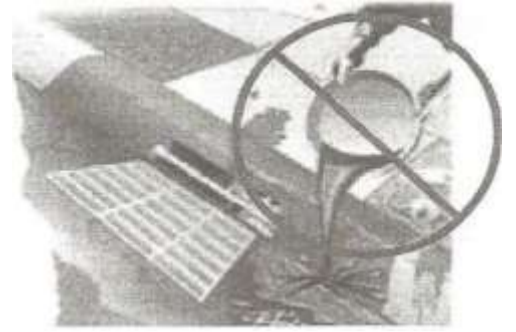
"Stormdrains: On the Pathway to the Sound"

by the Five Mile River Watershed Action Group

So what happens to all that rainwater, anyway?

The answer, at least in an urban environment like Norwalk, is that the rainwater makes its way to Long Island Sound. Along the way, it makes a few detours and finds some company.

Most of the rain that falls on Norwalk, New Canaan and Darien streets is directed into catch basins directly below the stormdrains. Catch basins provide a place for water to go, so the streets don't flood, and accumulate debris that falls through the stormdrain grates. The remainder of the storm water drains directly from your lawn, driveway or other hard surfaces directly into ponds and rivers.



Runoff from streets and yards contains not only rainwater, but also oil, fertilizer, sediment, and other contaminants. From the stormdrains, this mix of water and pollutants drains to small streams and ponds throughout the area. These feed into larger bodies of water, like the Five Mile River, which then flow into Long Island Sound. Now that you know how rainwater travels in its route to the Sound, please help make its journey as clean as possible.

Stormwater does not get treated along its journey.

The most reliable and effective way of keeping storm water clean is good preventive practice by each citizen. You can make a difference by:

- Paint, oil, or other pollutants should never be poured down storm drains. Stormdrains DO NOT provide any treatment or removal of pollutants before discharging to the environment. Contact the Department of Public Works to learn about opportunities for free proper disposal of hazardous waste.
- Don't dump leaves, animal waste, or other debris into catch basins. When the catch basin is clogged, storm water will accumulate, and your street will flood.
- Use a commercial carwash. When you wash your own car and the wash water goes down a storm drain, you are directing oil, grit, detergents and other pollutants into the stormdrain system and into Long Island Sound. Commercial car washes are required to treat and recycle the wastewater.
- Promptly repair vehicles that drip oils or other fluids.
- If you apply products to your lawn, take care not to let the fertilizer or pesticide spill over on to the street. The products have a very negative effect on our waterways.
- Contact the Department of Public Works if a catch basin appears to be blocked or flooded. Using a vacuum truck and hand tools, workers will remove the debris.

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