



## Storm Water Pollution Prevention Tips FACT SHEET 8

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
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**O**ahu is home to nearly one million residents who have a direct effect on our island environment and water quality.

### WHAT IS STORM WATER?

Storm water suggests large quantities of water (from rain, flooding) at any one given time. Basically, homeowners should keep three things in mind: 1) Storm water that stays on their property and soaks in is a resource helping replenish our ground water; 2) What does runoff should stay as clean as possible before making its way to the nearest storm drain; 3) Unlike the sanitary sewer system, anything dumped into the storm drain system usually flows directly into the nearest stream or drainage channel, usually without any treatment to remove pollutants.

With more than 20,000 storm drain inlets, and over 670 miles of storm drains to clean and maintain, we need your help.

### WHAT IS POLLUTED RUNOFF?

Because impervious surfaces (roofs, driveways, compacted soil, sidewalks, gutters, roads, parking lots, and other urban or developed land) do not allow rain to soak into the ground, the result is urban runoff.

This runoff becomes polluted by litter, pesticides, fertilizers, sediment from construction, bare soil, oil, pet waste, grass clippings and leaves that it picks up along the way to storm drains. In addition to rain, various human activities like irrigation, car washing, and malfunctioning septic tank can also be the source of polluted runoff.

When polluted runoff reaches a water body it can have a harmful impact on the plants and animals in and around the water. It can also affect humans who swim or fish in the water, or whose drinking water comes from the water body.

### WHAT ARE POLLUTANTS?

**“Pollutant” means any waste, cooking or fuel oil, waste milk, waste juice, pesticide, paint, solvent, radioactive waste, hazardous substance, sewage, dredged spoils, chemical waste, rock, sand, biocide, toxic substance, construction waste and material, and soil sediment. The term also includes commercial FOG waste as defined under Section 14-5A.1.**

## STORM DRAIN LABELING FOR VOLUNTEERS



### WHAT ARE BMPs?

Many simple yet effective methods can be used to help minimize individual runoff. These are called Best Management Practices or BMPs. Some storm water BMPs can be implemented when first planning and building the home and designing the landscape. Others are incorporated into daily activities. The cumulative impact from all residents in a watershed, the land area that “sheds water” to a single body of water, can have a big impact on water quality.

Here are 9 simple actions you can do around your home to be an Everyday Clean Water Hero!

### 9 WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION TIPS

- 1. Keep It Clean:** It is your responsibility to keep sidewalks, curbs and gutters in front of your property clean.
- 2. No Dumping:** Stencil storm drains with the message, “No Dumping, Drains To Ocean,” to help the community make the connection between neighborhood storm drains and local waterways used for drinking water and recreation.
- 3. Do It Right:** Use water-based paints whenever possible. Never clean brushes or rinse paint containers in the street, gutter or near a storm drain. Clean water-based paints in the sink, and oil based paints with thinner. Wrap dried paint residue in newspaper or harden in its container and dispose in the trash.
- 4. Don't Be An Oil Drip:** Identify and fix oil leaks on your vehicle; clean up drips and spills with absorbent material; dispose of used oil in an oil change box.
- 5. Car Wash:** A best practice is to use a commercial car wash where the wash water is recycled. When washing your car at home, wash it on grass, gravel or a pervious surface, e.g. grass pavers so water can soak into the ground. If you wash your car in a driveway or City street, use water and phosphorous-free soap, sparingly, with a bucket, sponge, and nozzle on the end of the hose to conserve water and minimize the amount of phosphates entering storm drains, streams and the ocean.
- 6. Cover Up:** Prevent soil and debris from leaving your property.
- 7. Read The Label:** Read and follow the label on all fertilizers and pesticides. The label is the law.
- 8. Yard Maintenance:** Gather grass, leaves, and yard trimmings for proper disposal or composting.
- 9. Pick It Up:** Remove and dispose of pet waste before you leave an area.

**Environmental Concern Line 768-3300**  
**www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com**



## Fall Storm Drain Labeling Campaign

The City and County of Honolulu Adopt-A-Stream Program offers volunteer training, including release forms, catch basin maps, storm drain stencils or stainless steel placards, explanation and demonstration, supply information, related fact sheet and clean water hero brochure with simple tips to minimize polluted runoff, and data entry for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit reporting purposes.

Various groups can volunteer, including school and youth groups, neighborhood organizations, social and business groups.

The labeling involves placing a clean water message next to a storm drain to help the community make the connection between neighborhood storm drains and local waterways used for drinking water and recreation. This campaign educates twice - first to the volunteers who spray paint the stencil or install the placard and second to the community who happens upon the "No Dumping, Drains To The Ocean" message.

The labels are in two forms: stenciled spray painted messages or permanent stainless steel placards. Each form of label has its own advantages and disadvantages, but both convey the same thought.

Does storm drain labeling work? According to the EPA, "regardless of the condition of the waterbody, the signs raise awareness about the connection between storm drains and receiving waters and they help deter littering and other practices that contribute to nonpoint source pollution ... "stenciling projects offer an excellent opportunity to educate the public about the link between the storm drains system and water quality."

- **Safety:** Because of the location of curb storm drains, working on streets with traffic is a necessity. Busy streets are avoided. Volunteers must be 12 years and older. When children and adolescents participate in the program, adult supervision must also be coordinated. All volunteers must complete a City release form, wear covered shoes and participate in a safety orientation. When using spray paint, volunteers will be provided orange safety vests, gloves, masks and eye protection. Use white latex road marking inverted spray paint.

- **Permission:** Go to [www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com](http://www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com), click on contact us to obtain permission on City streets. It is your responsibility to obtain the consent from all private landowners.

- **Planning:** Good team leader skills are needed! Plan out the area you are to stencil and assign teams and order supplies accordingly. One team can stencil from 10 to 15 storm drains per hour, and a can of spray paint can stencil ten storm drains. Please make arrangements for trash disposal.

- **Technique:** Training and adult supervision is key! Make sure overspray does not damage parked cars and other property. Extra steps, such as good cleaning of the surface to be stenciled and using two light coats of paint instead of one heavy one, can extend the life of the stencil.

- **Maps, Supplies:** Maps and supplies will be provided on the day of the project. For advance pickup, a 2 week advance notification is required; go to [www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com](http://www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com), click on contact us. You will receive a confirmation and informed to pick up supplies at the Kapolei Corporation Yard, 91-140 Olai Street, Kapolei. Hours are 8am-2pm, Monday-Friday, except Holidays and Furlough Fridays.

- **Education:** Extend the educational experience by having pre- and post- event sessions with volunteers and provide clean water hero brochures in each neighborhood. Download the brochure at [www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/learning\\_center/Final%20Clean%20Water%20He6C7060.pdf](http://www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/learning_center/Final%20Clean%20Water%20He6C7060.pdf).

- **Contingencies:** Group leaders must provide a cellular phone number with text messaging capability in order to be notified when a project is cancelled due to weather or other unsafe conditions by 6am.

- **Release Form:** go to [www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/hero/Adopt%20-%20Release.pdf](http://www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/hero/Adopt%20-%20Release.pdf)

- **Data Entry Form:** go to [www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/hero/stream\\_data\\_sheet.html](http://www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/hero/stream_data_sheet.html). Report any clogged, damaged, or contaminated storm water inlets.

- **Calendar:** [cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/calendar/index.php](http://cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/calendar/index.php)

- **Photo Gallery:** [www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/gallery/main.php](http://www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/gallery/main.php)

## LAWS AND ORDINANCES

Discharging pollutants to the storm drain system is against the law. Violations of the Clean Water Act can result in fines of up to \$25,000 per violation, per day.

The Clean Water Act gave the Environmental Protection Agency authority to implement water pollution control programs. In an effort to comply with the EPA's mandate, the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu, Section 14-12.23(a) Environmental Quality Control - Violation states, "It shall be unlawful for any person to discharge or cause to be discharged any pollutant into any drainage facility which causes a pollution problem in state waters, or causes a violation of any provision of the city NPDES permit or the water quality standards of the State of Hawaii."

### Sec. 41-26.3 Maintenance of streams.

The owner of any stream has the duty to maintain, dredge and clear such stream so that the natural flow of water runs unimpaired. The owner shall also be responsible for the removal of any debris, vegetation, silt or other items or material of any kind, that may interfere with the natural flow of water. (Added by Ord. 89-59)

### Sec. 41-26.5 Notice of violation--Order to maintain, clear, and remove.

The chief engineer is authorized and empowered to notify the owner of any stream to maintain and clear any stream, and to remove any debris, vegetation, silt or other items or material of any nature, as is necessary for the proper maintenance of such stream. Such notice shall be as provided for in Section 41-26.12. (Added by Ord. 89-59)

## BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION

The City and County of Honolulu, working under Federal Clean Water Act Guidelines, has a number of public education programs that focus on targeted participation and involvement to minimize and prevent urban runoff pollution. Existing projects such as Adopt-A-Stream, including storm drain stenciling, World Water Monitoring Day, Make A Difference Month, Earth Month (teen video contest, mauka to makai clean water expo), Annual Pearl Harbor Bike Path Cleanup, and workshops provide opportunities to educate an interested and committed neighborhood.



## REPORT, WHO TO CALL

As a resident, you can make a difference, both on the job and in your community. When you're at home, share your knowledge with neighbors and family. As you drive to work, report any illegal discharge.

Spill Response (Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response)  
- Local (HFD): 911 (24/7)  
- State (HSERC): 586-4249 (business hours), 247-2191 (after hours)

NPDES permitting questions 768-3287, 768-3242  
Storm water illegal discharges, occurred 768-3246, 768-3247  
Storm water public participation and involvement 768-3248  
Storm drain connection license 768-8106  
Clean stream hotline: 768-7890 (potential flood problem)  
Residential code enforcement (complaint investigations related to zoning and housing code for one and two family dwellings, sidewalk maintenance, vacant lot overgrowth, animal structures and setbacks) 768-8280