

Stormwater Program

We in the Bay Area are fortunate to live in one of the most desirable areas in the country, and we enjoy a climate and scenic beauty among the best in the world. One of the features that makes the area so beautiful is San Francisco Bay. But the bay, like many natural wonders, is still at risk of pollution. Even though you may live several miles from the bay, you may be polluting the bay without knowing it. Motor oil, paint products, pet wastes and chemicals we use in our homes and gardens are washed day after day into street gutters and storm drains by rain water, water from lawn irrigation and hosing down sidewalks and driveways. This mix of rain and other water is called urban runoff. Urban runoff and all its pollutants flow untreated through the storm drain system into local creeks and flood control channels and then directly into the Bay, where it can harm wildlife, pollute fisheries and ruin recreation areas.

No doubt, by now, you have seen the message stenciled on drain inlets in streets in Newark and throughout the Bay Area telling everyone "No Dumping -- Drains to Bay." This is one part of the public education component of the Storm Water Management Program. Other storm water management program components include regular street sweeping (try not to park on your street on street sweeping days - see schedule under "Street Sweeping"), litter control, the cleaning of curb inlets before the beginning of the rainy season, inspections of all industrial and commercial businesses and apartment complexes to ensure they don't contribute to storm water pollution as part of their daily operations, and requiring pollution controls to be included in the design and construction of new developments.

In order for the program to remain effective, we all need to continue to do our part to minimize pollution of urban runoff.

Remember, only rain down the drain!