

## STORM WATER 101

### CHAPTER 5: WHAT IS IN STORMWATER?

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Daily human activities result in accumulation of garbage and pollution on roads, public parking areas and sidewalks, lawns, roofs, etc. When it rains or when snow melts, water flows over the ground or impervious surfaces (paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops), and does not soak into the ground. This is called *storm water runoff*. Water that flows down the street when it's not raining, like when you hose down your parking lot, wash your car on the driveway or over water your lawn, is called *urban runoff*. Runoff could adversely affect water quality if it is not treated like sanitary sewage.

#### **Did you know Stormwater contains many of the following?**

##### ***Pet Waste***

Pet waste left on lawns, on public landscaped areas and in parks sends harmful bacteria in to storm drains whenever it rains. Bacteria and other pathogens wash into streams, rivers and lakes, and create health hazards for swimming (sometimes causing beach closures), fishing and other aquatic activities.



##### ***Pesticides, Fertilizers and yard waste***

Pesticides and fertilizers, especially when over used, get washed away by rain and over watering. In addition, yard clippings and leaves can wash into storm drains and contribute nutrients and organic matter to streams. These can increase algae growth in streams and rivers and reduce the amount of oxygen in the water which is needed by aquatic life.

##### ***Chemicals and Fluids from Businesses***

Cooking grease from restaurants with improperly maintained used grease barrels and dumpsters and gas station spills can be washed into storm drains. Auto fluids, motor oil from leaks or maintenance changes, cars waiting to be repaired can leak fuel, oil, and other harmful fluids that can be picked up by storm water



##### ***Household Products***

Household products like detergents from washing your car, every day cleaners, paint, and solvents are toxic to pets, wildlife and the environment. Soaps and detergents eat away at the slimy mucus layer that protects fish from diseases and bacteria



##### ***Litter and Debris***

Many people don't know that litter can wind up in the storm drains. Roads are covered in cigarette butts, fast food wrappers, soda bottles and coffee cups. plastic bags, six-pack rings and bottles, all get washed into water bodies.

This means that the water we swim in, boat on and fish in can get more and more polluted every time it rains. And this pollution can choke, suffocate, or disable aquatic life like ducks, fish, turtles, and birds.

***These are just some of the items that pollute or storm water and reasons that the State and Federal governments are getting involved. In our next edition we will further discuss coming regulations.***



## **STORMWATER 101**

### **Brought to you by the Dormont Council and its Stormwater Advisory Committee**

#### **THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT OUR STORMWATER IN DORMONT**

- Well over 80% of rain that falls on Dormont does not soak into the soil but runs off into our storm water sewer system;
- We own a storm sewer system made up of 577 inlets and almost 12 miles of storm water pipe but we only know the size and condition of about one-half of that;
- Almost anything that you throw in the street or apply to your lawn flows into Saw Mill Run and then into the Ohio River;
- Our sanitary sewer system and the storm sewer system are two different systems;
- We put over 90 Tons of sediment into Saw Mill Run per year;
- We are under orders from EPA to achieve a total reduction of 73% of sediment and 95% of nutrients that we contribute to the Ohio River;
- There are homes in Dormont that have incurred severe flooding damage due to storm water runoff and an antiquated storm water sewer system.