

# ILLICIT DISCHARGES AFFECT EVERYONE... EVEN YOU!

A BUSINESS AND HOMEOWNERS  
GUIDE TO CHARLES COUNTY'S  
IDDE PROGRAM



Charles County Government  
Dept. of Planning & Growth Management  
[www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/  
Watershed](http://www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/Watershed)

# ILLICIT DISCHARGES AFFECT EVERYONE... EVEN YOU!

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## What is the Charles County Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) Program

Under its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) municipal stormwater permit, Charles County Government is required to implement an inspection and enforcement program to ensure all discharges to and from the municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) that are not composed entirely of stormwater are either permitted by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) or eliminated.

Charles County Government conducts an annual random screening of storm drain outfalls as well as a routine survey of commercial and industrial watersheds. The overall goal of the IDDE program is to identify illegal dumping activities, unauthorized storage of materials and illicit discharges. By identifying such activities and having specific reports of a violation, the county proceeds with efforts to remove such unpermitted discharges.



Learn more:

[www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/Watershed](http://www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/Watershed) (Click on Pollution)

## What is an Illicit Discharge?

Illicit discharges are generally any discharge into a storm drain system that is not entirely composed of rain water. Unlike wastewater which flows to a wastewater treatment plant, stormwater generally flows to waterways without any additional treatment. Illicit discharges often include pathogens, oil, grease, litter, surfactants, and various toxic chemicals that pollute our waterways that are used for recreation and drinking water.

### Penalties for Illicit Discharges

Illicit discharges are a serious offense that can result in criminal prosecution. Every case of illicit discharge is investigated. Persons responsible for illicit discharges are subject to civil fines and possible criminal prosecution.



## What is Illegal Dumping?

Illegal dumping is anyone depositing solid waste at a location other than a legally accepted facility. Illegal dumping is a serious problem that requires the county to relinquish funds for investigation, clean-up and enforcement.

### Penalties for Illegal Dumping

Illegal dumping is a serious offense that can result in criminal prosecution. Every case of illicit discharge is investigated. Illegal dumpers are subject to civil fines and possible criminal prosecution.



## Examples of Illicit Discharges

- ▶ Any induction of non-stormwater to the ground or into the storm drain.
- ▶ Sanitary waste water.
- ▶ Septic tank effluent.
- ▶ Car wash waste waters.
- ▶ Motor oil disposal.
- ▶ Radiator flushing disposal.
- ▶ Laundry waste waters.
- ▶ Auto or household toxic chemical disposal.
- ▶ Restaurant grease or cooking oil.
- ▶ Leaves or yard waste.



## Examples of Illegal Dumping

- ▶ Disposing of your trash in dumpsters or containers you do not own.
- ▶ Disposing of trash along public roadways, vacant lots, fields, woods, stream valleys, parks or any other unacceptable location.
- ▶ Dumping chemicals, pesticide's, used automotive fluids or other chemical liquids into storm drains, water ways, or on the ground.
- ▶ Burning solid waste.
- ▶ Improperly disposing of yard waste over your property line or nearby woods.
- ▶ Burying solid waste.
- ▶ Dropping off solid waste at any location other than a regulated, legally accepted facility, dump, transfer station, or convenience center.

## Reporting of Illegal Dumping or Illicit Discharges

- If you suspect an illicit discharge is being released into the storm sewer system, contact the Charles County Government at 301-645-0692 (Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.).
- If you suspect an illicit discharge is going into the storm sewer system during non-business hours, please call the Maryland Department of the Environment's toll-free 24-Hour emergency number for pollution problems in Maryland at 866-633-4686 (or 866-MDE-GOTO).
- Submit complaint online: [www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/Watershed](http://www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/Watershed) (click on Pollution, and then Report a Suspected Illicit Discharge)
- When reporting, try to include the following:
  - Date and time of incident.
  - Location of dumping or discharge.
  - Digital photos and/or description of incident observed.
  - Vehicle and license plate information if involved.

## How Businesses Can Help Keep Illicit Discharges Out of Our Waterways:

Keep water from contacting work areas – work areas can be contaminated by raw materials, liquids, grease, waste oil, heavy metals, or other fluids. Stormwater runoff flows across work areas and picks up these contaminants.

### To keep from discharging contaminated stormwater:

- Keep stormwater runoff from contacting any industrial areas, either indoors or out.
- Install roofs or move industrial operations indoors.
- Avoid hosing down outdoor work areas or washing commercial vehicles where the wastewater will enter the storm sewer system.

### Keep contaminants off surfaces that will come into contact with stormwater:

- Control leaks and spills – Clean them up, even if only minor.
- Review operating routines to ensure adequate requirements are met to eliminate potential for contamination on surfaces.
- Regularly check equipment for exposed or leaking parts.
- Minimize the use of chemicals. When needed, make sure you are using the right product in the right amount by following all label instructions. Dispose of any waste and empty containers properly.

### Educate employees about how to prevent stormwater pollution:

- Develop required standard operating procedures such as proper equipment washing.
- Provide training to employees on the importance of following the procedures so they understand why they are being asked to change their methods.
- Post signs as reminders to close covers and protect storage containers, including dumpsters.
- Let your customers know the efforts you are making to minimize waste and eliminate potential pollution sources.



## How Homeowners Can Help Keep Illicit Discharges Out of Our Waterways:

- Used oil, antifreeze, or batteries should be recycled. Be sure to check your vehicle on a regular basis for leaks, and clean up any spills with an absorbent that can be swept up and disposed of properly.
- Either wash your car on the grass, so the waste water filters through the soil, or take your car to a commercial wash that sends their water to a wastewater treatment plant.
- Grass clippings and yard waste should be swept away from storm drains after mowing and cutting to either be composted or taken to a proper disposal location.
- Bag or scoop your pet's waste and dispose of it properly.
- Many household products are considered hazardous waste and should be disposed of properly. Charles County Government offers regularly scheduled Household Hazardous Waste Collection days. Details: [www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/HHW](http://www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/HHW) or call 301-932-3599.





**Charles County Government**  
**Department of Planning &  
Growth Management**

200 Baltimore Street • La Plata, Maryland 20646  
301-645-0692 • MD Relay: 711 (TDD: 1-800-735-2258)

Equal Opportunity County



Learn more at...

[www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/Watershed](http://www.CharlesCountyMD.gov/Watershed)

**About Charles County Government**

The mission of Charles County Government is to provide our citizens the highest quality service possible in a timely, efficient and courteous manner. To achieve this goal, our government must be operated in an open and accessible atmosphere, be based on comprehensive long- and short-term planning and have an appropriate managerial organization tempered by fiscal responsibility. We support and encourage efforts to grow a diverse workplace. Charles County is a place where all people thrive and businesses grow and prosper; where the preservation of our heritage and environment is paramount; where government services to its citizens are provided at the highest level of excellence; and where the quality of life is the best in the nation.

It is the policy of Charles County to provide equal employment opportunity to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religious or political affiliation or opinion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity or expression, or any other status protected by law.