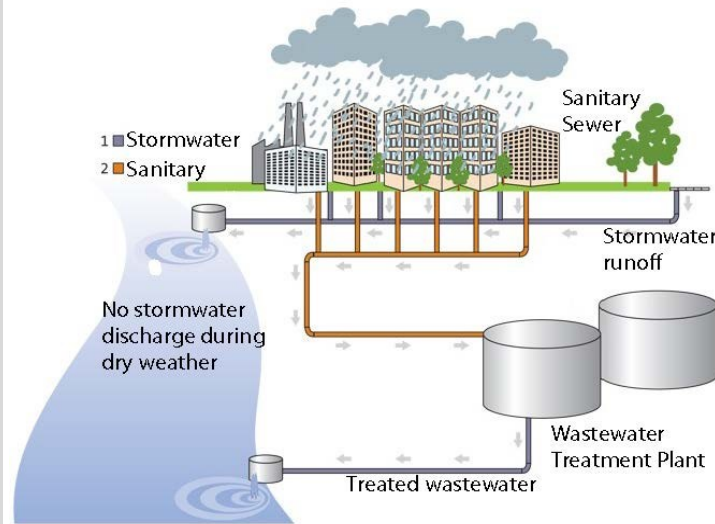


What is Storm Water & How it Affects You

Stormwater is simply water that falls onto the ground from rain or snow events. The water that does not soak into the ground is called stormwater runoff. As stormwater runs off lawns, roofs, driveways, parking lots, and roads, it can flow into our wetlands, streams, lakes, and the rivers and carry pollutants it picks up along the way. The pollutants include oil, grease, gasoline, lead and cadmium from the roads; pesticides, herbicides and animal waste from residential areas & farmlands; and dirt from construction sites, to name a few. Added to this list are items improperly disposed of into storm drains or on the ground.

All these contaminants end up in waterways, wetlands, ponds, lakes, and can impact shellfish beds, fish and animal habitat, recreational swimming, and even our drinking water.

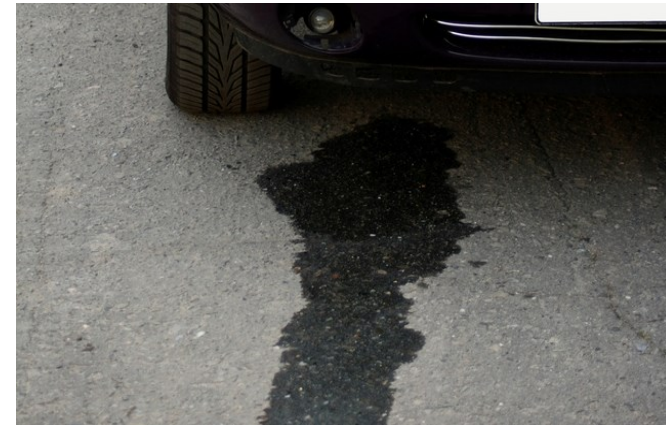
Illegal dumping and putting anything down a storm drain is another cause of water pollution. To lessen pollution, we all need to do our part and change our habits. Your efforts along with your neighbors can make a difference.



Fort Wayne City Utilities
200 E Berry Street, Suite 270
Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802

Call 311 or (260) 427-8311

Water Quality Information from Fort Wayne City Utilities



Auto Leaks



CITY UTILITIES



Sources of Water Pollution

Sources of water pollution like industrial waste from factories have been greatly reduced in recent years. Now, more than 60% of water pollution comes from things like stormwater runoff and the pollutants it carries. So believe it or not, the biggest source of water pollution today is not the industry– it is actually households like yours. But everyone can do small things to help clean up our water. And it starts with realizing that our sewers and storm systems are separate in many areas– what goes into storm drains flows directly into the environment, untreated.



What's The Problem With Auto Fluids?

Auto fluids like oil do not dissolve in water. They last a long time and stick to everything from sand to bird feathers. Oil and other petroleum products are toxic to people, wildlife and plants. One pint of oil can make a slick larger than a football field. Oil that leaks from our cars onto storm drains, and driveways is washed into storm drains, and then usually flows directly into a lake, stream or river.

Facts and Figures

- Oil, antifreeze, and brake fluids contain heavy metals that can harm aquatic wildlife. The oil from just one oil change can pollute up to a million gallons of water.
- Used motor oil is the largest single source of oil pollution in our lakes, streams, and rivers. Americans spill 180 million gallons of used oil each year into our waters. This is 16x the amount spilled by the Exxon Valdez in Alaska (the oil spill that killed at least half a million birds and other wildlife in 1989).
- If we refined the billion gallons of motor oil we used every year in the US, we could save 1.3 million barrels of oil per day, or half the daily output of the Alaskan Pipeline. According to the American Petroleum Institute, it takes 43 gallons of crude oil compared to just one gallon of used oil, to make 2.5 quarts of virgin lubricating oil.



What YOU Can Do

How can you use auto fluids and help keep our waters clean?

- Stop drips. Check for oil leaks regularly and fix them promptly. Keep your car tuned to reduce oil use.
- Use ground cloths or drip pans beneath your vehicle if you have leaks or are doing engine work. Clean up spills immediately. Collect all used oil and other fluids in containers with tight fitting lids. Do not mix different engine fluids.
- Use cat litter to soak up leaked oil, which can then be thrown in the trash once it's dry.
- Never dispose of oil or other engine fluids down the storm drain, on the ground or into a ditch. Dumping automotive fluids into storm drains has the same results as dumping the materials directly into a body of water.
- Recycle used motor oil and other car fluids. Many auto supply stores and gas stations will accept used oil. Buy recycled (re-refined) motor oil to use in your car.

