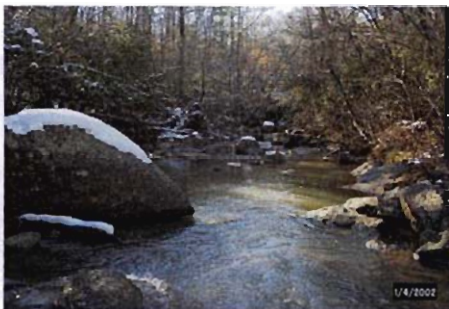


## Storm Water Management Program

*In May of 2001 the governmental agencies that make up ALOA joined together to address EPA's upcoming Phase II requirements.*

*This brochure is one of a series of publications regarding storm water issues in Lee County.*

*The series is produced by the ALOA Storm Water Advisory Panel and is intended to protect, maintain, and restore the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of local waters in order to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.*



*Cleaner streams provide a benefit to all.*

## Illicit Discharges

### CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information regarding your community's storm water program please contact the following agencies:

City of Auburn – Department of Public Works  
334-501-3000

<http://www.auburnalabama.org/pubworks/phase2stormwater.html>

Lee County – County Engineer  
334-745-9792

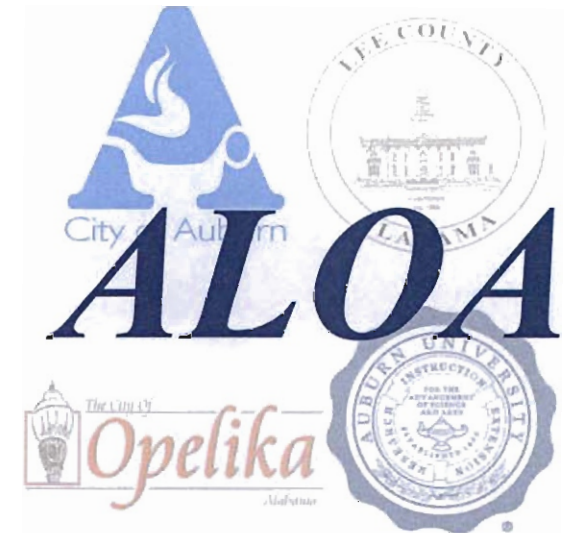
City of Opelika – Department of Public Works  
334-705-5400  
[www.opelika.org](http://www.opelika.org)

Auburn University – Risk Management and Safety  
334-844-4870



## STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

### Illicit Discharges



*“Local Citizen Groups and Governments Working Together for Clean Water”*

## WHAT IS AN ILLICIT DISCHARGE?

An illicit discharge is defined as any discharge, unless specifically exempted, not composed entirely of storm water. Illicit discharges typically enter a system through an unwaranted connection.

Storm water conveyance systems are sometimes employed illegally as an inexpensive and/or convenient alternative to proper disposal of wastes or wastewater. These illegal disposals can occur as illicit connections from commercial or business establishments or illegal dumping into storm drain inlets.

## ARE ALL NON-STORM WATER DISCHARGES ILLICIT?

It is important to note that there are many non-storm water discharges that are not considered illicit discharges. These include such discharges as water-line flushing, landscape irrigation, lawn watering, water used for fire fighting and draining the water from a swimming pool, but only after the water has been dechlorinated (usually 2 to 3 days after you last added chlorine—use a pool water test kit to be sure).

Although allowed, if any of these activities prove to be a significant pollution hazard, the activity will be stopped and the discharge method modified to protect the environment.

## WHAT IS A STORM WATER CONVEYANCE SYSTEM?

Storm water is the water from rain which flows over the ground or pavement without soaking into the ground. The storm water conveyance system includes the roadside ditches, gutters, inlets, catch basins, and underground pipes that collect storm water and carry it away from our streets, parking lots, and yards.



## IS THERE A REGULATION REGARDING ILLICIT DISCHARGES?

In January of 2004, the City of Auburn enacted an Illicit Discharge Ordinance, which makes it illegal to discharge pollutants to the storm sewer system. The City of Opelika has a similar ordinance on the books. The ADEM regulates illicit discharges in Lee County, outside the city limits of Auburn and Opelika. Auburn University has also adopted illicit discharge regulations following ADEM guidelines. These ordinances are components of the storm water management programs mandated by the Phase II Storm Water Regulations. They are designed to help maintain and protect the quality of the water in our streams, lakes, and rivers.

For more detailed information on illicit discharge ordinances in your area, please contact your storm water program managing agency listed in the contact information of this brochure.

## HOW CAN I PREVENT STORM WATER POLLUTION?

We can play a pivotal role in controlling illicit discharges as follows:

1. Do not dump leaves and grass clippings into ditches, storm drains, or creeks. They clog storm sewers, which can cause flooding. Decaying leaves and grass add excess organic matter and nutrients to our waters. Leaves decay and oxygen is depleted in the water while nutrients promote excessive algae growth. Instead try to compost leaves and grass clippings, and use the compost to enrich and condition soil. Or, gather the leaves in an appropriate location for collection.
2. Do not dump motor oil, antifreeze, or any other chemicals down the storm drain. One quart of oil can contaminate 250,000 gallons of water! If you spill motor oil or other fluids, don't hose the spill into the gutter or ditch. Instead, spread kitty litter to absorb the spill, then sweep it up and put it in the trash. Inspect and maintain your car to keep oil, antifreeze, and other fluids from leaking.
3. Minimize use of pesticides and herbicides (insect and weed killers). Some of these products are deadly to fish, birds, and other wildlife. If you must use them, make sure you are using the right product and the right amount and apply at the right time. Excessive watering or rain-

fall will cause these chemicals to be washed into the waterways when they are not properly applied.

4. If you plan on fertilizing your lawn, contact the County Extension Service for a soil test kit. The results of the test will help you determine the proper nutrient needs of your lawn and eliminate the unnecessary or excessive use of nutrients.
5. Take advantage of recycling opportunities such as Hazardous Waste Collection Days. You can take paint, solvents (like turpentine), and other household hazardous wastes to a recycler for proper disposal.
6. Improperly located or failing septic systems can discharge inadequately treated sewage that may contaminate surface waters or groundwater. This discharge contains bacteria and viruses that can be harmful to humans and aquatic habitat. Even a properly operating septic system can release more than 10 pounds of nitrogen per year to the groundwater for each person using it. Periodic inspections and maintenance to make sure the system is functioning properly will help reduce the potential for environmental impacts.

## WHAT ARE THE PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE?

- Issuance of Misdemeanor: In the cities of Auburn and Opelika, any person violating any of the provisions herein shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and each day during which any violation of any of the provisions herein is committed, continued, or permitted shall constitute a separate offense. If convicted, violators can be punished with a fine not more than \$500.00 for each offense. The ADEM regulates fines in Lee County, outside Auburn and Opelika, therefore the ADEM's penalties concerning illicit discharges do apply. The Clean Water Act establishes fines up to \$25,000 per event for more serious violations.
- Expense of Restoration: if convicted of violating existing provisions, will have to bear the expense of restoration for any damages.

