

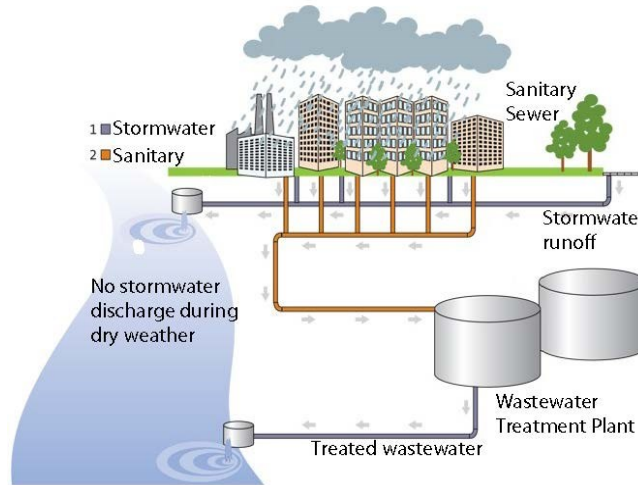
What is Stormwater & How it Affects You

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 & farm-lands; 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 habitats. Your efforts along with your neighbors can make a difference.

Stormwater vs. Sanitary Wastewater



Find out more about stormwater management at:

www.cityoffortwayne.org/utilities

To report a stormwater drainage issue or to report illegal dumping call 311 or (260) 427-8311

Cleaning Your Carpets

A Reference Guide for Fort Wayne Residents



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 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 YOU Can Do

- If you clean your own carpets, rugs or upholstery, dispose of your waste down a sink or toilet. Even if a cleaning product is labeled “non-toxic” or “biodegradable.”
- Carpet cleaning wastewater should be filtered before discharging it to the sanitary sewer to prevent carpet fibers from clogging pipes. The filtered material can be disposed of in the garbage/trash, provided that the waste is not contaminated with hazardous pollutants.
- Wastewater may be discharged to a pervious area, such as a lawn, as long as it does not overflow into the street, gutter, neighbor’s property, parking lot or storm drain.
- Wastewater must *never* be discharged into the street, gutter, or parking lot that empties directly into the storm sewer system.

Pollution Prevention at Home

Wastewater from carpet cleaning if not handled properly can be a cause of water pollution and may contain detergents, potentially hazardous chemicals and suspended carpet fibers. Detergents may even contain phosphorus. Phosphorus is a nutrient that can promote excessive algal growth in our water bodies that will degrade water quality. Some carpet cleaning agents are directly toxic to aquatic life.

Suspended carpet fibers can clog fish gills, reduce growth rates, decrease resistance to disease and impair reproduction. The deposition of these solids can also damage habitat filling spaces between rocks that provide shelter to aquatic organisms, as well as covering and smothering the eggs of fish and aquatic insects.



Using Professional Carpet Cleaners

- Make certain your carpet cleaner knows and follows the appropriate practices.
- Ask the cleaner where they intend to dispose of **your** wastewater.
- Insist that the wastewater is discharged to your sanitary sewer through your sink or toilet.
- In non-sewer areas, or if the carpet cleaner is taking wastewater with them, insist wastewater and residues be retained in collection tanks, and transported to an appropriate sanitary sewer discharge point.
- If a pervious area is to be used, verify that it does not flow into the street, gutter, neighbor’s property or directly into the storm drain inlet.

If you see a carpet cleaner discharge directly to a street or storm sewer call 311

