

Hollidaysburg Borough Conquering Stormwater Runoff

Working together with the Blair County Conservation District, Hollidaysburg Borough introduced a rain garden and vegetated swales to their community. Rain gardens are depressed areas that allow rain water to collect and slowly soak into the ground. Planted with native grasses and flowering perennials, rain gardens filter nutrients, chemicals, and sediments from the rainwater. Bioswales are similar to rain gardens, however, they are narrow shallow channels planted with grasses and shrubs that slow runoff to promote infiltration and filtration.

To see your community's stormwater practices in action go to the Hollidaysburg YMCA and take a walk down Poplar Avenue. Become informed from the educational signs placed around the YMCA site and share the news.



Blair County's Stormwater Program

The Environmental Protection Agency and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection regulate stormwater runoff, including runoff from Blair County owned storm sewer systems. In response, the County implements a stormwater management program which is a multi-faceted approach that includes:

- Public education and outreach on stormwater impacts
- Public involvement/participation in activities targeted to improve stormwater quality
- Detection and elimination of illicit discharges into the storm sewer system
- Requirements for construction site runoff controls
- Requirements to provide long-term stormwater management practices for new construction
- Standard operating procedures to minimize/eliminate negative impacts from tenant and contractor activities
- Implementation of stormwater best management practices to reduce pollutant loads.

For questions or comments concerning Blair County's Stormwater Management Program please contact:

**Blair County Conservation District, Stormwater
Coordinator at (814)- 696-0877 ext. 5
or Hollidaysburg Borough at (814)- 695-7543**



Stormwater Runoff Impacts

and the Impact You Can Make



*Information concerning Blair
County's Stormwater Management
Program can be found at:
cleanblairwater.org*



What is an Illicit Discharge?

Any substance other than stormwater entering the storm sewer/receiving waterbody that threatens public safety, public health, and the environment is known as an illicit discharge. They occur when pollutants are poured directly in a storm drain or stream, as well as, being left on the ground and picked up by runoff. Examples include:

- Vehicle or equipment washing
- Hydraulic fluid or fuel leaks
- Excessive application of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers
- Dumping of trash or other waste

What is NOT an Illicit Discharge?

- Fire-fighting activities
- Water line washing
- Landscape or lawn irrigation

These discharges may flow into the storm sewer or waterway without consequence.

What Can You Do to Protect Our Streams?

Report Illicit Discharge: On Hollidaysburg Borough property, if you see an illicit discharge, a potential source for an illicit discharge, or witness illegal dumping, you should contact the Public Works Department at (814)-695-7543. If a discharge is observed that is discolored or has an odor, immediately contact emergency services by calling 9-1-1.

Do not cause an illicit discharge: Be mindful when performing activities that could introduce pollutants to stormwater runoff.

- ⇒ Pick up and properly dispose of pet waste
- ⇒ Clean up vehicle fluid or fuel leaks and spills
- ⇒ Properly dispose of hazardous substances such as automotive oil, cooking oil, paint, cleaners, etc.
- ⇒ Apply pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers per manufacturer's specifications



Bioswales along Poplar Avenue in Hollidaysburg, PA

What is Stormwater Runoff?

Stormwater runoff is precipitation such as rain or snow that flows over ground surfaces. This has been dramatically increased by human development due to the result of impervious (hardened) roadways, rooftops, and parking lots not allowing the water to soak into the ground. Instead, stormwater is collected and conveyed through a system of pipes, inlets, and ditches known as the *storm sewer system*, leading directly to local creeks and streams.

Stormwater Impacts

Receiving waters downstream of storm sewer systems are impacted by the increased volume and velocity of runoff along with the pollutants transported within the runoff.

Flooding: Stormwater runoff from intense rainfall can exceed the carrying capacity of the stormwater system and waterways, leading to the flooding of roads, yards, and structures.

Erosion: Uncontrolled stormwater rapidly increases the amount of runoff flowing into a stream which can wash away the stream bank and transport sediment downstream impacting aquatic habitat and water quality.

Pollution: Stormwater runoff flows across surfaces such as parking lots and roadways mobilizing contaminants like animal waste, chemicals, hydraulic oil, and trash. These contaminants are then transported downstream to streams, rivers, and ultimately the ocean, harming aquatic habitats and preventing recreational use in waterways.