

What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is the water produced from when rain, snow, sleet, etc. fall to earth. This stormwater can either seep into the ground or collect to potentially become a flood.

To protect the people of Indian Head from flooding and protect water quality, the Town has a series of drains, pipes, and water quality improving Best Management Processes (BMPs) called a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4).

The MS4 directly drains to our lakes, streams, rivers, and ponds so it plays a very important part in keeping our waters clean.

Did you know that both the Potomac River and the Mattawoman Creek eventually flow into the Chesapeake Bay? That means that any contaminants released into these watersheds are contributing to the degradation of one of the most critically endangered ecosystems in our region.

Indian Head is doing its part to protect local waterways by helping to keep the water clean before it reaches our streams.

You can help too, by following the advice in this pamphlet and by participating in local stormwater events. More information on these events can be found on the back of this of this pamphlet.

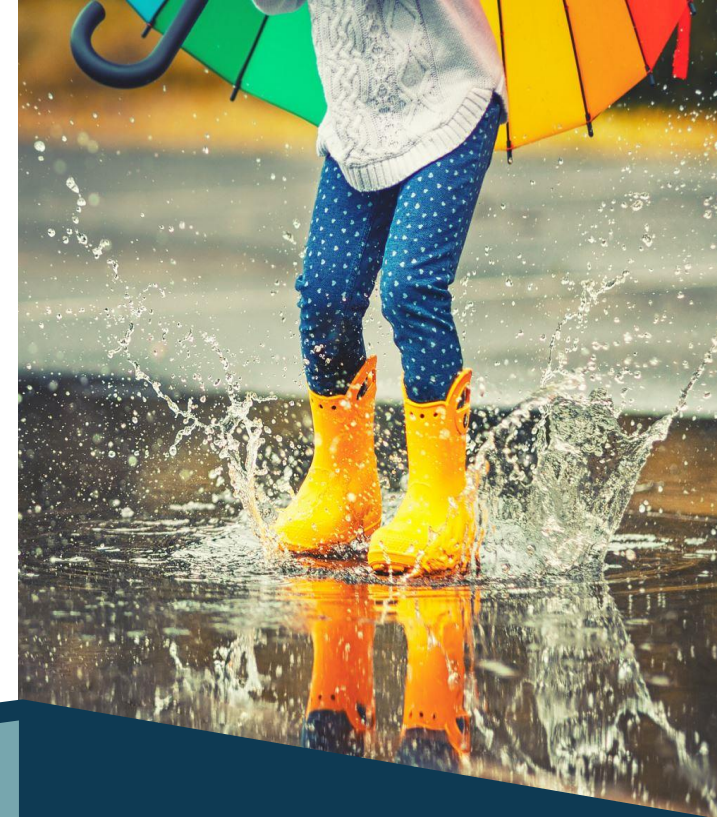
Town of Indian Head Stormwater Resources

For more information regarding stormwater events, public meetings, and other public participation opportunities, please visit the Town website at the bottom of this page. The Stormwater/MS4 subpage also contains an educational survey and an illicit discharge reporting form.

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www.townofindianhead.org



What is Stormwater?

For Town Residents



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What is a BMP?

Most stormwater infrastructure is all about conveyance. It serves to transport the stormwater from around your home and neighborhood quickly and safely away to avoid flooding. But not all of it is just for transport. Some parts of the system have been built to clean the water as it passes through.

You may have already noticed man-made ponds, basins, and channels around the Town. Pipes leading into these structures transport water from other areas of the Town to infiltrate into the ground instead of directly discharging into a waterway. These structures are called Best Management Practices, or BMPs.

It is unavoidable that stormwater runoff will pick up sediment and other pollutants from roads and other surfaces as it makes its way into our drains. These BMPs help to clean the stormwater before it reaches our waterways.

Because these BMPs serve such an important role, it is important that they be maintained in working order. If you have one in your neighborhood, for example, they may not be the best place to play in. And they should definitely be kept clear of any litter and debris.

Please take care of our BMPs so that they can take care of our stormwater!

What can I do to help?

Much of the land in Indian Head is residential property, like your home and backyard. This means that if everyone joins in, we can make big changes to the quality of our stormwater!

Lawn Chemicals

Use chemicals like fertilizers and pesticides only according to instructions provided on the labels. Using too much or applying improperly can cause havoc on aquatic life and vegetation when it reaches our waterways.

Pet Waste

Everyone loves their pets, but it's important that you take care of their waste. Leaving it on the street, while an unsanitary practice on its own, can also lead to unhealthy bacteria and viruses entering our waterways.

Car Maintenance

Taking care of your car is important, especially in areas like ours where road salt is needed to get through the winters. But if you aren't careful when you wash your car, all of the dirt, cleaning chemicals, and other products can make their way into our rivers. Make sure not to wash your car where it drains to our stormwater system. Take care when changing oil or other fluids to prevent leaks and immediately clean up any spills if they do occur.

What is an Illicit Discharge?

40 CFR 122.26(b)(2) defines an illicit discharge as any discharge to an MS4 that is not composed entirely of storm water, except allowable discharges pursuant to an NPDES permit, including those resulting from firefighting activities.

- The rule of thumb is, **only stormwater should go into stormwater drains!**
- Illicit discharge can happen intentionally, such as someone draining their pool water into the storm to a municipal separate storm sewer drain near their house.
- It can also happen accidentally, such as someone leaving oil or chemical residue on their driveway and letting the rain wash it into the MS4.
- Indian Head needs your help to find and eliminate illicit discharge. If you see anything that is not stormwater entering the storm drains or other parts of the MS4, please report it through one of the following options:
 - Call the Town Office at (301) 743-5511 during business hours
 - Visit the Stormwater/MS4 Information subpage of the Town website to submit an electronic report