

4. Construction Site Runoff Controls

Construction sites are the biggest contributors of a major storm water contaminant - dirt. To reduce the impacts of silted runoff on local waterways, developers must implement and maintain erosion and sediment controls. Routine inspections will ensure that pollution controls are established and preserved throughout development.

Why is dirt so bad?

- Silted runoff is highly turbid or “cloudy.” It’s like an underwater dust storm, which clogs fish gills and interferes with photosynthesis.
- As it settles, it can smother fish eggs and other bottom dwelling organisms.
- Soil acts like velcro, picking up other pollutants as it’s washed into our waterways.
- Silt settles out in slow moving sections of streams, which can lead to flood concerns. Silt also winds up in lakes and ponds, which may necessitate expensive dredging.



5. Post-construction Runoff Controls

Create a program requiring new and redevelopment projects to utilize environmentally friendly designs,

minimizing ecological impacts over the long-term. Some examples of this policy include:

- Using grass swales instead of concrete ditches. Grass, unlike concrete, gives rain a chance to soak in.
- Using vegetated buffer strips to stabilize creek banks and help filter pollutants.
- Building detention ponds that allow pollutants to settle out before reaching the creek.



6. Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping

Finally, we must set the example as a city, by making sure our “house” is in order. We’re examining city operations and changing the way we do things to minimize our contribution to pollution.

Pollution Solution

Clean water is an inviting, soothing, life giving natural resource. As stewards of the environment, we all share in the responsibility of keeping our waterways clean. The creation of a Storm Water Management Program requires a community effort. It’s a huge challenge, but in Baytown we’re serious about being a part of the solution. Contaminated storm water runoff threatens our health and environment. Please join us as we strive to keep our creeks, streams, bays, and bayous pollution-free for generations to come.

Managing Storm Water Challenges in Baytown



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Baytown is a city with an abundance of creeks and bayous. Our waterways support a wealth of wildlife and aquatic habitat, and provide us with a glimpse of nature in the midst of an urban setting. Clean water is a vital resource and the common denominator of any healthy environment. As a growing community, we are faced with new ecological challenges and responsibilities. Protecting the quality of our water resources is at the top of that list.



The Storm Water Story

Today, we know that storm water pollution is one of the biggest threats to the health of our creeks and bayous. In urban areas like Baytown the problem is magnified by widespread development, which puts added stress on the environment. By converting land from an undisturbed condition to a developed state we have covered the natural landscape with roads, rooftops, and parking lots. Rainwater that used to soak into the ground now becomes urban runoff, a mixture of rain and assorted pollutants.

The Pollution Picture

As it flows over our streets and lawns, urban runoff picks up all sorts of contaminants like pesticides, fertilizers, dirt, detergents, automotive fluids and paint. Pet waste, grass clippings, litter and debris are also problematic. Basically, whatever we dump, pour, spill, leak, drain or discard onto the ground eventually winds up as polluted rainwater flowing into the city's storm sewer system.

Follow the Flow



Many people believe that once the runoff enters the storm drain, it flows to the wastewater treatment plant. **Not True!** Instead, storm sewers discharge the untreated polluted water into our creeks, streams, bays, and bayous.

Enter the EPA

To decrease the amount of pollution reaching our surface waters, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued storm water regulations as part of the Federal Clean Water Act. They are designed to guide urban areas, such as Baytown, in their efforts to keep our waterways clean. The ultimate goal is to reduce storm water pollution to the "maximum extent practicable." How will we do this?

Laying the Foundation

The EPA has established the foundation for our Storm Water Management Program. As a regulated city, we are currently developing our Storm Water Management Program around "6 minimum control measures."

1. Public Education and Outreach

Develop a program to educate our community about storm water impacts on our creeks and bayous, plus inform residents how they can help prevent storm water pollution.

2. Public Participation and Involvement

Give the public - that's you - opportunities to participate in the development and implementation of the storm water program. This is your opportunity to be heard. Express your opinions. Share ideas. We encourage you to get involved and "spread the word."

3. Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination

We must develop a plan to locate and stop illegal discharges into storm sewers. In addition, we are required to map the storm sewer system, identifying all major inlets and outfalls. This will show where storm water enters and exits the system and help isolate sources of pollution. Adding a geographical dimension to water quality data provides us with a sophisticated management tool to visualize, analyze, and track changes.

