

How Can Ivyland Borough Help Prevent Water Pollution?

Did you know that as far back as 1948, when the Federal Water Pollution Control Act was enacted, the need to keep our waterways clean has been of obvious concern. In 1972, the 1948 Act was reorganized and expanded and is now what is commonly known as the Clean Water Act (CWA). Under the CWA, the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) has implemented various pollution control programs. One part of the act is that it prohibits the discharge of pollutants into waterways without the appropriate permits. These permits are designed to reduce the pollutant levels in the stormwater discharge. Ivyland Borough, like every Borough and Township in Pennsylvania, has various storm sewer facilities, such as storm sewer piping systems and detention basins which discharge storm water. These are considered to be a “Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System” and is regulated and permitted under the MS4 Program which, in Pennsylvania, is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP). So how does that affect you, as an Ivyland Borough resident? Part of the MS4 Program is to provide education to the public so that each individual can help keep our waterways cleaner for future generations. That is a daunting task and seemingly impossible for one person to make a difference, but there are ways to help. Below is the first of several upcoming articles from the Borough which will give the residents tips and information on how every person can make a difference. You can also find additional information under the links listed on the Borough’s website at www.ivylandborough.org under the “Stormwater Info” tab. If you have questions or would like more information on how you can help in other ways, please contact the Borough.

Stormwater Pollution Control Tips:

When it rains, stormwater is collected by the Borough’s storm sewer system and carried directly to the nearby streams and creeks. It is the Borough’s responsibility to monitor the storm sewer system for pollutants. In the case of stormwater, a pollutant is basically anything other than rain water. Below are 10 simple things the typical home owner and/or business owner can do to help reduce pollutants in rain water carried to our streams and creeks. By making an effort to keep our rain water clean you are helping the Borough and the environment.

- Use fertilizers and pesticides very sparingly. These items can help the health of your lawn but when applied in excessive amounts, can harm water quality and aquatic ecosystems. Always follow the application instructions on the package.
- Dispose of all yard waste and debris properly. Sweep up lawn clippings from driveways and sidewalks (Do not sweep into street gutters) -OR- Compost your yard waste. Yard debris, including leaves and other organic plant material like shrubbery trimmings and grass clippings, are a significant source of stormwater pollution. This debris can clog

culverts, storm drains, and pipes, causing flooding. Debris can carry fertilizers and pesticides from your yard and deposit them in streams and ponds. Piles of leaves and grass clippings will overload a stream's ability to process leaf litter, causing nutrient pollution and oxygen depletion.

- Never dump anything down storm drains. Unlike sanitary sewer systems, stormwater does not get treated. Anything that is dumped into a storm drain goes directly into our waterways.
- Vegetate bare spots in your yard. Bare spots allow stormwater to runoff your property at a faster rate and can cause erosion.
- Direct downspouts away from paved surfaces and onto pervious areas (grass or landscaped areas). This allows time for the stormwater to be absorbed and filtered into the ground instead of flowing directly into the storm sewer system.
- Take your car to the car wash instead of washing it in the driveway. Car Washes treat and recycle the water used to wash your car and does not enter the storm system. If you must wash at home, move the car onto a grass surface where the wash water can permeate the ground where it can be naturally filtered.
- Check cars for leaks, and recycle motor oil. Oil, antifreeze, and other fluids often leak from cars onto parking lots or are spilled during maintenance. Keep your vehicles well maintained to avoid runoff issues from leaking fluids.
- Pick up after your pet, even in your own yard. Pet waste can be a major source of bacteria and excess nutrients in local waters. When walking your pet, remember to pick up the waste and dispose of it properly. Flushing pet waste is the best disposal method. Leaving pet waste on the ground increases public health risks by allowing harmful bacteria and nutrients to wash into the storm drain and eventually into local waterbodies.

Keep watching for future articles on how you can prevent stormwater pollution. Ivyland Borough and your environment thanks you!