

A Drop of News

The Maple City Stormwater Toolbox

March 2021

2021 Stormwater Outfall Survey



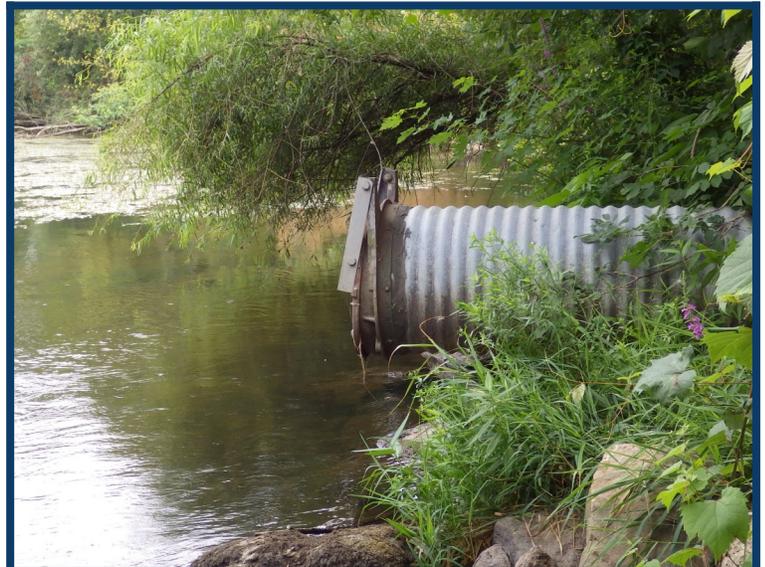
Have you seen the Stormwater Department staff in hip waders recently? What about carrying a canoe?

This spring, the Stormwater staff is screening Goshen's outfalls—where storm pipes, swales, or ditches empty into a waterbody. The goal of this effort is to check for potential past, or ongoing, illicit discharges (the release to a waterway of non-stormwater) using a few key indicators as guides.

We look for signs of a past illicit discharge by noting residual substances in a pipe, assessing abnormal vegetative growth nearby, and visually observing the quality of the water where water pools near an outfall (i.e. cloudy from sediment or green from algae growth).

In addition, we conduct our screenings during dry weather (at least 48 hours after a rainfall event) to spot places where discharges may be something other than stormwater. If a flow is spotted during dry weather, we test for basic properties like pH, ammonia, temperature, and *E. coli* to make educated guesses about possible sources.

If you see signs of a past illicit discharge or water coming from a pipe during dry weather, contact the Stormwater Department and we will investigate!



Example of an outfall pipe into a Goshen waterway.



A green pool like this may suggest nutrient pollution coming from the outfall that has caused abnormal algae growth.



Flows during dry weather, even a trickle, may mean there is an active illicit discharge. The stormwater staff investigates the source and takes samples.



March Pollutant Challenge

Will you help keep **PLASTICS** out of our waterways?

Why are plastics in our waterways a problem?

Research on the way plastics (and the microplastics they break up into) move through our environment is beginning to uncover just how large an issue we have created. Study after study has found microplastics in all sampled locations—plastics in our water, food, and even our bodies. Recently, the City of Elkhart’s aquatic biologist Daragh Deegan found plastic microfibers—commonly from polyester and other plastic fiber-based clothing—in Asiatic clams from all nine of his sample locations in the St. Joseph River, the Elkhart River, and Rock Run Creek. For more information on the impacts of plastics go to bit.ly/PlasticImpactsG.



As the sun begins to degrade single-use plastics like this bottle, they break up into smaller and smaller pieces—microplastics.

What can you do about it?

As consumers, we have many options for helping *reduce* the number of plastics that could end up in a waterway. Simple choices, like bringing a reusable grocery bag, can have a massive impact on the number of plastics in circulation when many people participate in the effort. Consumers can also help prevent microfibers from entering our wastewater treatment system (where technology to filter them out is not available) by purchasing natural fiber clothing or washing plastics-based clothing in special wash bags that help capture microfibers.

To go the extra mile, you can help prevent someone else’s plastic litter from entering our storm drains and ending up in our waterways. Trash pick-ups in your neighborhood are a great place to start!

Report a Pollutant

Stormwater pollutants include anything other than rain that could flow or be washed into a storm drain. If you see a pollutant entering a storm drain, please call 574-534-2201, send an email to stormwater@goshencity.com, or submit a Stormwater Report through the City’s “Report an Issue” button on the City of Goshen website, www.goshenindiana.org.

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