

## National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

### What is NPDES?

The NPDES permit program addresses water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants to waters of the United States. Created in 1972 by the Clean Water Act, the NPDES permit program is authorized to state governments by EPA to perform many permitting, administrative, and enforcement aspects of the program.

### What is a point source?

The term point source is also defined very broadly in the Clean Water Act because it has been through 25 years of litigation. It means any discernible, confined and discrete conveyance, such as a pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, discrete fissure, or container. It also includes vessels or other floating craft from which pollutants are or may be discharged. By law, the term "point source" also includes concentrated animal feeding operations, which are places where animals are confined and fed. By law, agricultural stormwater discharges and return flows from irrigated agriculture are not "point sources".

### What are waters of the United States?

The term "waters of the United States" is also defined very broadly in the Clean Water Act and after 25 years of litigation. It means navigable waters, tributaries to navigable waters, interstate waters, the oceans out to 200 miles, and intrastate waters which are used: by interstate travelers for recreation or other purposes, as a source of fish or shellfish sold in interstate commerce or for industrial purposes by industries engaged in interstate commerce.

### What is a pollutant?

The term pollutant is defined very broadly in the Clean Water Act. It includes any type of industrial, municipal, and agricultural waste discharged into water.

### Problems with Stormwater Pollution

Stormwater runoff is generated from rain and snowmelt events that flow over land or impervious surfaces, such as paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops, and does not soak into the ground. The runoff picks up pollutants like trash, chemicals, oils, and dirt/sediment that can harm our rivers, streams, lakes, and coastal waters. To protect these resources, communities, construction companies, industries, and others, use stormwater controls, known as best management practices (BMPs). These BMPs filter out pollutants and/or prevent pollution by controlling it at its source.



The NPDES stormwater program regulates some stormwater discharges from three potential sources: municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s), construction activities, and industrial activities. Operators of these sources might be required to obtain an NPDES permit before they can discharge stormwater. This permitting mechanism is designed to prevent stormwater runoff from washing harmful pollutants into local surface waters.

*Very simply put...anything that goes into a storm sewer system except rainwater is an illicit discharge, the City of Belleair Bluffs has passed ordinances regarding NPDES and it is illegal to put anything in a storm sewer.*

There are ways to protect the waters of the United States and keep the storm drains free of pollutants:

Pool Maintenance:

Connecting a discharge pipe to the city storm drain system is illegal!

Never drain water to the street or storm drain, there is chlorine, diatomaceous earth, salt or other chemicals in that water and are considered pollutants.



Landscaping:

Do not use fertilizer with nitrogen or phosphorus between the months of June – September, not only is this considered a pollutant, it is now the law.

Do not blow the grass clippings or leaves into the street.

Irrigate during the morning hours, this allows you to avoid evaporation and cut down on fungus.

Avoid using pesticides that eliminate beneficial insects.

Vehicle maintenance:

Wash vehicles over grass or gravel areas or use a commercial car wash when possible.

Promptly clean up any spills in the driveway to prevent contaminants from washing into storm drains.

Household:

Never put any paint solvents or chemicals into a storm drain all of this and motor oil can be disposed properly at Pinellas County Solid Waste Hazardous Material 727-464-4623

These are just a few things we can all do to eliminate pollutants in the storm drains.

**Please report any illicit discharges to the City of Belleair Bluffs Public Works Department at 727-584-2151.**

Please refer to the home page for links to:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Florida Department of Environmental protection Agency (FDEP)
- Fertilizer ordinance
- Pesticides and herbicides
- Stormwater and illicit discharges