

# Stormwater Management Information

## Stormwater Management

Whenever precipitation falls from the sky, there are three options to what happens to that water. It either soaks up into the soil or roots of trees and vegetation, evaporates into the atmosphere, or runs off into drainage basins which flow into creeks and streams. Stormwater is any water from rainfall or snowfall that runs off into bodies of water. Chadds Ford Township is located in the picturesque Brandywine Valley. Most of the Township's stormwater eventually flows into the Brandywine Creek. It is crucial that stormwater is monitored, so that pollutants are not introduced into the Brandywine Watershed. Proper management of stormwater directly relates to the quality of our water. This is especially important in Chadds Ford Township because the vast majority of residents obtain their water from private wells. Water quality is not just important for wildlife, but directly affects our own health.

This page contains useful stormwater management information for residents, commercial businesses, and developers in Chadds Ford Township. General information about stormwater management can be found via the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental protection [HERE](#). More information about municipal obligations for stormwater management including NPDES permits and stormwater ordinance requirements can be found [HERE](#).

- **Important Note: If you are planning a project that creates 500 square feet or more of new impervious coverage or grading that disturbs more than 5000 square feet, a Grading/Stormwater Management permit is required. Please click [HERE](#) for more information.**

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### Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination

#### EMERGENCY ILLICIT DISCHARGE PHONE NUMBERS:

**In the event that you witness an illicit discharge, please contact someone immediately. Do your best to obtain a video of the violation, including license plate numbers, faces and/or names of persons involved, and be sure to get as much detail as possible of the what is taking place.**

**DEP Emergency Illicit Discharge Number: 1-800-841-2050**

**PA State Police: 911**

## **Delaware County Hazmat Response: 911**

**Chadds Ford Township: 610-388-8800 (During Office Hours: M-Th. 8-4 PM; F - 8 -12 PM)**

### **What is an Illicit Discharge?**

An illicit discharge is an unlawful act of disposing, dumping, spilling, emitting, or other discharge of any substance other than stormwater into the stormwater drainage system. The stormwater drainage system includes streets, ditches, catch basins, yard inlets, lakes, and streams. Illicit discharges cause water pollution by sending pollutants right into creeks, streams, ponds, and lakes. Be sure you know what illicit discharges are so you can help prevent water pollution and keep our streams clean! Prevent water pollution. Call the Township to report an illicit discharge or any type of water pollution in our streams or stormwater inlets. In case of emergencies, call 911.

### **Examples of Illicit Discharges:**

- Paint being poured into or near the storm drainage system
- Changing oil or antifreeze over or near a storm structure
- Washing vehicles where the runoff could drain into the storm drainage system
- Washing dumpster pads and allowing the runoff to drain into the storm drainage system

### **What Information Should Be Given When Reporting a Suspected Illicit Discharge?**

- **What is your name and best contact information?** This information is kept confidential and is only used if the Township requires additional information.
- **What time did you see the discharge?** It is important that illicit discharges are reported immediately so the person(s) responsible can be found and the discharge can be cleaned up and corrected as soon as possible. We want to respond as quickly as possible to prevent pollution to our environment.
- **Where did you see the discharge?** We'll need an address, intersection, business name, or landmark to help us quickly find the illicit discharge.
- **What do you think the discharge is?** Was it a paint spill, oil spill, sewer leak, or some another type of illicit discharge?

**Stormwater Complaints:** Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection requires Chadds Ford to investigate illicit discharges into streams. Promptly report any of the events listed on the [Who Are You Going To Call](#) water quality hotline document by either calling the appropriate telephone number or contacting the Township office.

Below is an Illicit Discharge Complaint Form. Fill one out and send to the township if you know of any illicit discharges. The definition of an illicit discharge is explained above.

- [Illicit Discharge Complaint Form](#)

**Questions and/or Concerns about Illicit Discharges? Please contact the below resources:**

**Chadds Ford Township**

Phone Number: [610-388-8800](tel:610-388-8800)

**Delaware County Conservation District (DCCD)**

Programs Overseen/Information Provided: DCCD administers the State's program to control sediment pollution from earth disturbance activities (Chapter 102), and processes NPDES applications and seeks compliance toward Stormwater discharge permits for construction activities.

Website: <http://www.delcocd.org/>

Phone Number: [610-892-9484](tel:610-892-9484)

**PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Southeast Regional Office**

Programs Overseen/Information Provided: DEP's mission is to protect Pennsylvania's air, land, and water from pollution and to provide for the health and safety of its citizens through a cleaner environment.

Website: <http://www.dep.pa.gov>

Phone Number: [484-250-5900](tel:484-250-5900)

Emergency Spill Response Number: [1-800-841-2050](tel:1-800-841-2050)

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

Programs Overseen/Information Provided: Conduct broad work to reduce environmental risk and human health. Many of EPA's efforts are seen through regulation of the PA DEP, DCCD, and the Township.

Website: <http://www.epa.gov/>

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**Pennsylvania's DEP Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Program (MS4):** The federal Clean Water Act (CWA) makes it illegal for the discharge of pollutants into stormwater systems without the appropriate permits. The MS4 Program is a program created by Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection that satisfies the federal run-off related requirements of the Clean Water Act. The implementation of the MS4 Program occurs at the municipal level, due to zoning ordinances and subdivision and land development regulations.

For information concerning the MS4 Program, click [HERE](#).

**Below are some helpful guides for stormwater management:**

- [Green Guide for Property Management](#) - This guide may assist managers of large properties to identify green initiatives

- [Greener than Grass](#) - This information sheet outlines the benefits of meadow conditions on properties.
- [Homeowners Guide to Stormwater BMP Maintenance](#) - This document provides information about Stormwater Management, stormwater regulations for homeowners, and stormwater Best Management Practice (BMP) descriptions.
- [Homeowners Guide to Stormwater Management](#)
- [Monthly Stormwater Planner](#) - This guide provides a seasonal guide with tips for yard care and stormwater management
- [Rain Garden Brochure](#) - CRC has prepared this helpful guide for creating and maintaining a rain garden on your property
- [Improving Stormwater Basins Naturally](#) - CRC has prepared this guide to naturally improving a stormwater management basin
- [EPA Water Homepage](#)
- [EPA Water Pollution Prevention and Control](#)
- [EPA Stormwater Homepage](#)
- [EPA MS4 Main Page](#)
- [Stormwater BMPs](#) - National Menu of Stormwater Best Management Practices
- [Stormwater Reference Documents](#) - An EPA compiled listing of outreach materials and reference documents
- [MS4 Fact Sheet](#)
- [Nonpoint Source Pollution](#) - At this site there are several sub-topics under the "Quick Finder" section that may be useful for MS4s
- [EPA Watersheds](#)

**Swimming Pool Requirements:** Chadds Ford Township would like to remind pool owners of their responsibilities concerning the discharge of pool water. The Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law and the Chadds Ford Township NPDES MS4 permit prohibits the discharge of non-stormwater, such as pool water, into the municipal storm sewer system. Every year, there are incidents of fish kills relating to either the discharge of pool water at the end of the season, at the beginning of the season, or the running of tap water or pool water hoses into storm sewers. Pool water discharged with residual chlorine at even the low level found in tap water has had adverse impacts on nearby creeks and ponds. Pool owners/operators can be liable for any damage to aquatic life or the stream that occurs as a result of their pool discharge(s).

Discharge of pool water to either sanitary sewers or storm sewers is prohibited by our municipality's ordinances. Pool water should not be discharged to storm drains, or streets that run to storm drains, but rather over a grassy area at a rate that optimizes infiltration and aeration and will not cause erosion. According to the DEP guidelines, pool water should have zero chlorine residual, and be within the acceptable ranges for temperature and pH as specified. For swimming pool water guidelines, please refer to the [DEP Swimming Pool Water Fact Sheet](#).

Single family residences with pools should also not be draining pool water directly to streams, storm sewers, or streets. Discharges should be over a grassy area at a rate that allows the water to soak into the ground. It is not permitted to discharge filter backwash water to storm sewers or streams; this water must also be infiltrated to the ground.

Should you have any questions regarding your responsibilities under the PA Clean Streams Law, please contact the Township or the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Southeast Regional Office, Bureau of Water Management, 484-250-5970. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our streams healthy!

**Mowing Tips:** Set your lawn mower blade to its highest setting. A high cut (3") encourages deeper roots. Increasing the grass height only 1/8 of an inch results in about 300 square feet more leaf surface for each 1,000 square feet of lawn. More leaf surface enables grass to generate more energy for healthy growth, especially of roots. Taller grass shades out weeds, limits moisture evaporation from soil and harbors beneficial insects which control pests. Cut the lawn often enough so that you remove no more than 1/3 of the blade at one time. This means more frequent mowings in the spring, fewer in the heat of summer.

Leave your grass clippings as you mow. Clippings provide nutrition for your lawn. They are comprised of water, organic matter, nitrogen, and a small amount of phosphorus--all things your grass needs. Because clippings supply up to 50% of a lawn's nitrogen needs over the season, you will not need as much fertilizer. Clippings from regular mowings will NOT cause thatch build up and will not hurt the grass.

Do not dump yard waste (clippings, branches, or leaves) in the street where it can wash into storm drains, or in parks, along streams, or piled at the base of trees. [Click here for more mowing tips.](#)

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## **STORMWATER FAQ's:**

- **I own a house on two acres. Why should I care about stormwater?** Stormwater affects everybody, we all live downhill from somewhere. If we don't control runoff from our own property, somewhere, somebody down hill from us will feel it. Remember your parents saying to you - "if everybody threw their trash out the car window the whole road would be covered with trash?" If we all neglect our responsibilities to maintain our own property and control our own runoff, there will continue to be devastating effects on those down hill from us. You can be the solution to stormwater pollution! \* Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly \* Repair all auto and motor equipment leaks \* Clean up after your pet \* Wash cars on your lawn, not on your driveway \* Recycle \* Dispose of household hazardous waste such as batteries, used oil, paint and certain cleaning solvents at designated collection locations. For details regarding household hazardous waste collections contact 610-892-9620 or <https://www.delcopa.gov/recycle/hhw.html>

- **This doesn't pertain to me. I don't discharge any stormwater from my property.** Do you live in a house with rain gutters? Do your rain gutters take your roof water and dump it onto your driveway or to a storm drain? Do you have a storm drain on or near your driveway or property? Do you drain your swimming pool every fall? Did you build a tennis court, expand your driveway, enlarge your roof or add a garage? Unless you have some sort of stormwater system on your property, you are discharging water from your property into a stream somewhere, making it somebody else's problem. (For details on how to properly drain your pool - see Frequently Asked Questions FAQ's) Here are a few suggestions to make a difference: Install a rain barrel (for information about rain barrels contact Pennsylvania Resource Council, [www.prc.org](http://www.prc.org)) and use the collected rainwater for watering flowers and gardens. Disconnect your rain gutters from discharging onto driveways and redirect the water to grassy areas or infiltration beds (dry wells).
- **Why is my township now getting involved with stormwater? Why doesn't the State take care of this?** The state is a big place and there are a lot of watersheds in Pennsylvania. State agencies such as the Department of Environmental Protection rely heavily on local governments to do the majority of regulating when it comes to keeping the streams clean, healthy and controlling flooding from unmanaged stormwater.
- **I run a business in Chadds Ford Township. How can I help keep the streams clean?** If you operate a restaurant, keeping your dumpster from leaking fluids into the ground is a start. Sweeping your sidewalks rather than washing possible pollutants into the ground will help. For an informative brochure created specifically for food establishments and if you operate an automotive repair or gas station please visit or call the Township office.
- **My neighborhood uses a professional lawn treatment company. Should we worry about pollution?** When you fertilize your lawn you're not just fertilizing the lawn. Rain washes the fertilizer along the curb, into the storm drains and into the creeks and eventually into the Rivers. This causes algae to grow which uses up oxygen the fish need to survive. Don't fertilize before a rain storm and don't spray on sidewalks or driveways. Use fertilizers sparingly. Test your soil and consider organic/slow release products. Leave grass clippings lay, they act as natural fertilizer for your lawn. Compost and introduce compost into the soil in trouble spots. Maintain a buffer strip of un-mowed natural vegetation bordering all waterways to trap fertilizers.
- **What is the County doing to help?** The Stormwater Management Act, Act 167 of 1978, provides for the regulation of land and water use for flood control and stormwater management. This law, among other things, requires counties to prepare and adopt a watershed stormwater plan for each designated watershed.
- **I have an in ground septic system. Should I worry about pollution?** Modern septic systems are designed to function well for a period of approximately 15-25 years if they are used and maintained correctly. Your system is designed to work with the soils on your property. The components of the soil filter the gray water and remove pollutants. You should have your system pumped as recommended by your maintenance company, or no

less than every two years. When you have your septic tank pumped you should have the system checked over to be sure it is in proper working order. No strong chemicals or old medicine should ever be flushed through the house plumbing into the septic systems. They will kill beneficial bacteria that are necessary to break down the waste in your system. Certain paint, paint thinners, excessive amounts of bleach, oils of any kind should all NOT be put into your system as they can cause immediate failure and are a danger to the aquifer. Avoid using a garbage disposal. Do not connect foundation sump pumps to your septic system. Keep trees and shrubs at least 35 feet away from your tile field to prevent root damage to pipes. Route surface drainage (including snow melt) away from your tile field. For more sewage related reference materials available contact your DEP Regional offices at 484-250-5900 or check out the DEP Home Page at [www.dep.state.pa.us](http://www.dep.state.pa.us)

- **What is a rain garden and how can I make one?** Rain gardens are planted areas designed to soak up rain water, which drains from a roof or other impervious surfaces. They offer several benefits to communities and residents. Rain Gardens: Increase the amount of stormwater that recharges groundwater Filter pollutants from stormwater that washes off roofs, lawns, and paved areas Provide attractive habitat for birds, butterflies, and many beneficial insects A more thorough guide is available via CRC Watersheds Association by clicking [here](#).
- **Why did Pennsylvania start regulating stormwater management?** Since 1978, Pennsylvania has had laws in place to control stormwater, as required by the Federal Government. (For decades, the State has not intensely focused on issues, until the devastation caused by the flooding from Hurricane Floyd in September of 1999.) Property destruction, personal losses, and litigation forced the state and federal governments to step up efforts and work towards controlling the effects of development as they may contribute to downstream flooding conditions. As an important note, Stormwater management is an unfunded man
- **What is NPDES PHASE II?** The acronym stands for National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems. This is a stormwater management program developed by the state offices of the Department Of Environmental Protection to address pollution and flooding. The Delaware County Conservation District (DCCD) processes and seeks compliance toward stormwater discharge permits for construction activities. State laws require municipalities to obtain state permits, and to strictly regulate water quality and quantity from construction sites, new development, illegal dumping to storm sewer systems and to educate the public (residents and business owners) on the importance of pollution prevention.
- **What does NPDES PHASE II have to do with me or my neighborhood?** If you live in a neighborhood that has streets maintained by the municipality, and there are storm sewers in those streets and pipes that take the stormwater to a stream or other body of water, you are responsible to keep your basins clear of sediment and pollutants and to prevent illegal dumping into storm sewers. If you are aware of a neighbor who connects a

hose from their washing machine or sewage system directly into a storm sewer or drainage basin, or stream, you should notify township officials immediately. If you are aware of any malfunctioning septic systems you should notify township officials immediately. For an informative brochure entitled *When It Rains, It drains*, click [here](#).

- **What watershed am I in?** Brandywine Creek