



TETRA TECH MPS

You Dumped WHAT Down that Storm Drain?

Many people do not realize that when they dump a bucket of oil or toxic material into a storm drain, they are dumping it directly into their streams, lakes and rivers! Storm Drain Stenciling is a hands-on program that raises awareness of the harmful effects of dumping hazardous materials into storm sewers. Traditionally, the message “Dump No Waste – Drains to Stream” is spray-painted onto the concrete next to storm drains, using a plastic or Mylar stencil. Volunteers gain a sense of making a difference in their community, while local residents learn more about their surroundings. Recent studies in Wisconsin and Washington show that storm drain stenciling worked to raise citizen awareness of storm drain connections to local lakes and rivers. Over 75 percent of people who had seen the stenciled drains knew where their water went, compared to about a third of those who had not seen a stenciled drain.

More permanent alternatives are available than spray painting, such as plastic curb markers. Many communities have custom door hangers given to residents in the targeted areas that are stenciled or labeled. The door hangers describe the program, effects of dumping hazardous materials into storm drains and proper disposal methods. Stenciling can usually be done with a group of three to five people.

For additional information about storm drain stenciling, contact:

Huron River Watershed Council
(734) 769-5123

Clinton River Watershed Council
(248) 853-9580

Friends of the Rouge
(313) 792-9628

Genesee County MSU Extension
(810) 244-8500

Look for more articles about storm water pollution prevention in future issues. For more information about MDOT's Storm Water Management Plan, check out www.mdot.state.mi.us/stormwater.