



Stormwater Drain Maintenance on Private Property

The City of Eugene stormwater system includes stormwater drains (also known as “catch basins”), street gutters, underground pipes, roadside ditches, and open drainage channels. This integrated system carries run-off from public and private property directly into Eugene’s surface waters such as Amazon Creek, the Willamette River, and the Mill Race. Stormwater drains are designed to help prevent flooding on both public and private property and to protect the water quality of the receiving surface waters.

Exterior drains that collect any rainwater are required to be connected to the **stormwater** system; all **interior drains** are required to be connected to the **wastewater** system (sometimes called the *sanitary* system). Although discharges from the wastewater system are treated before being released into the Willamette River, discharges from the stormwater system receive no treatment. Therefore, any pollutant that enters the stormwater system will be discharged into surface waters if not trapped and removed prior to the discharge point.

Proper stormwater drain maintenance is crucial for flood control and water quality protection. The City of Eugene Maintenance Division cleans all stormwater drains in public rights-of-way, drainage easements, and on City-owned property. **It is the private property owner’s responsibility to maintain stormwater drains on his or her property and to minimize any release of pollutants to the public stormwater system.** Failure to maintain a private system is considered a violation of the City of Eugene’s Stormwater Administrative Rule.

Some stormwater drains have a **collection sump** (an area between the bottom of the outgoing pipe and the bottom of the drain) to trap sediment and other debris that settle out of the liquid. Others have both a **collection sump** and a **separator**. The separator is designed to trap floating materials such as oil, grease, and plastics. Some drains have neither, and all materials that enter the drain will eventually be carried downstream to the receiving waters if not trapped and removed.

STORMWATER DRAIN MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

“ First, determine what type of components your drains have. Do they have separators, collection sumps, and/or other water quality protection features?

“ Remove all debris from the collection sump when the debris reaches a depth of one-half to two-thirds of the distance between the bottom of the outgoing pipe and the bottom of the sump. *Do not* allow the waste that has collected in the sump to go into the outgoing pipe during cleaning. For more information on cleaning methods or professional companies that provide this service, call the City of Eugene Public Works Maintenance Operations staff at 682-4800.

“ **In Lane County, stormwater drain debris is regulated as a “special waste.” Call Lane County Waste Management at 682-3828 for information on proper disposal of the removed waste or for names of companies that can legally dispose of such waste.**

“ Check the condition of the separator unit. There are several different types. If the separator is a box with a lid, make sure the lid is on and closing properly. If the separator is a turn-down pipe, check to make sure the pipe is not broken. *Do not* knock a hole in the top of the pipe or remove the lid if the drain seems plugged. Instead, remove the accumulated debris and unclog the pipe or inlet box. Do not allow debris to accumulate above one-half to two-thirds of the distance between the bottom of the turn-down pipe or bottom of the inlet box and the bottom of the sump.

“ If the drain does not contain a separator, consider using an oil-absorbent filter in the drain. Several types are available from environmental, safety, or industrial equipment suppliers. Some drains can be easily and inexpensively retrofitted with a separator. For more information on filter products or retrofits, call the City of Eugene Public Works Maintenance Planning staff at 682-4800.

“ If the drain does not contain a separator **or** a collection sump, consider installing a **sediment filter** *and* an **oil absorbent** medium in front of the outgoing line. Remove the debris that collects in front of the filter frequently, and change out the absorbent as needed. This will greatly improve the quality of the water leaving your site. For more information on available products, call the City of Eugene Public Works Maintenance Planning staff at 682-4800.

“ Use “Best Management Practices” to reduce the need for storm drain maintenance. Keep outside areas clean. Do not hose, wash, or dump anything into a stormwater drain. Cover all materials that are stored outside to prevent rainwater from leaching pollutants into the stormwater system. Sweep paved areas regularly. Protect all drains during construction activities.

For more information, please call the City of Eugene Public Works Maintenance staff at 682-4800