



# INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

## Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4)

[www.idem.IN.gov](http://www.idem.IN.gov)

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### Description:

- When it rains or snows, the water that runs off of city streets, parking lots, construction sites and other impervious surfaces can wash sediment, oil, grease, toxics, pathogens and other pollutants into nearby storm drains, waterways, streams and other conveyance systems.
- MS4s are designated entities that utilize conveyances for rainwater such as roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, curbs, gutters, ditches or storm drains.
- In November 1990, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) began Phase I of its storm water program requiring states to develop regulatory programs to address pollution issues associated with storm water.
- Today, new regulations, known as Storm Water Phase II, have been established in Indiana to reduce the impacts of storm water run-off from construction, industrial, municipal, governmental and institutional sources.
- General storm water rules are found in 327 IAC 15 (Article 15).
- 327 IAC 15-13 (Rule 13) establishes requirements for designated Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) entities to develop local Storm Water Quality Management Plans (SWQMP). This Rule became effective on August 6, 2003.
- The SWQMP developed by a MS4 is required to address six minimum control measures that include public education and outreach, public involvement, illicit discharge, construction run-off, post-construction run-off, and pollution prevention and good housekeeping.

### Environmental Impacts:

- Impervious surfaces, such as streets, sidewalks and parking lots cannot easily absorb water.
- When a pollutant is spilled on an impervious surface, it stays there until storm water run-off washes it away.
- When it rains or snows, the water that runs off of land surfaces can wash sediment, oil, grease, toxins, pathogens and other pollutants into nearby water bodies.
- This water is normally discharged untreated into local surface water causing environmental impacts.
- The pollutants associated with storm water run-off can adversely affect the physical and biological integrity of Indiana's surface waters. Pollutants can reduce the recreational use of Indiana's waters and be detrimental to the habitat and diversity of aquatic organisms, fish and other wildlife.

### IDEM's Role:

- IDEM is responsible for protecting human health and the environment in accordance with federal and state regulations, while providing for safe industrial, agricultural, commercial and governmental operations vital to a prosperous economy.
- IDEM administers the MS4 Storm Water Program as part of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permitting Program established by 327 IAC 15-13 (Rule 13).
- The designations of MS4s are based on a combination of population, population density and population growth.
- Each designated MS4 is required to obtain a General Permit (individual permits may also be required on a case by case basis). IDEM works with MS4 entities via the permitting process and program oversight to ensure that the MS4 program is administered in accordance with the local SWQMP. The purpose for SWQMP is to administer a local program that addresses water quality and protects the health of Indiana's environment.



**Citizen's Role:**

- Citizen involvement has been and will continue to be a vital component of IDEM's overall plan to protect Indiana's environment and the health of Hoosiers.
- MS4 programs are required to incorporate public participation.
- Citizens are encouraged to contact the local MS4 in their community and become involved in the local MS4 program. Questions or concerns associated with the MS4 program should be directed to IDEM's Office of Water Quality.

**More Information:**

- For more information on storm water and Phase II regulations, visit IDEM's Storm Water Program website at [www.idem.IN.gov/4896.htm](http://www.idem.IN.gov/4896.htm).
- For more information about MS4 Rule 13, visit IDEM's website at [www.idem.IN.gov/4900.htm](http://www.idem.IN.gov/4900.htm).
- For Rule 13 related questions or concerns, please call IDEM's Rule 13 program coordinator at (317) 234-1601.

