

# El Cajon Storm Water Protection Program

## How You Can Prevent Storm Water Pollution

We can all make a big difference in stopping storm water pollution. Each year significant pollution is created due to careless work habits and lack of awareness about what pollutes our storm drain system. The Clean Water Act makes it illegal to allow any substance other than rainwater to enter the storm drain system. Doing so may lead to monetary fines or prosecution.



### Pollution of our waterways will:

- make them unsafe for swimming and other recreational activities
- ruin their appearance
- kill plants and animals that live there



### Storm drains should only drain rain.

The storm drain system collects rainwater from storms, and human-activity-related urban runoff from roofs, driveways, sidewalks and streets. All roadside gutters and drainage inlets lead to the storm drain system. And the storm drain water enters our streams, rivers, harbors and ocean. If you place waste near a roadside drainage inlet it will end up in the storm drain. Storm water is not treated – it will appear in the waterways in much the same condition as when you place it there. Remember, “Only Rain in the Drain!”

### What pollutes our waterways?

Oil, grease, tar, silt, concrete cutting, cement wash water, water used in cleaning, paint, litter, cigarette butts, animal droppings, detergent and chemical cleaners are all pollutants. Remember that, just because a product is labeled as “biodegradable” does not mean it can be dumped into a storm drain. What can you or your business do to stop pollution?

You can stop pollution from getting into the storm drains by:

- ✓ not hosing waste away - instead sweep it up and dispose of it with your other trash.
- ✓ mopping up any spills immediately and not letting them flow into the storm drain system.
- ✓ making sure that driveways, sidewalks and gutters are clear of debris including leaves and grass clippings.
- ✓ making sure the contaminated water used for rinsing equipment such as paint brushes and containers does not flow into the storm drain system.
- ✓ putting litter in the trash bins - including cigarette butts.
- ✓ picking up all animal droppings.
- ✓ disposing of excess paint and chemicals in the hazardous waste area at landfills.
- ✓ washing your vehicles on the lawn or in a commercial car wash – this stops detergent, oils and grease from getting into the storm drain system.
- ✓ regularly servicing your vehicles - this stops leaking oil and other pollutants from getting into the storm drain system - it only takes one quart of oil to contaminate 250,000 gallons of water.

