

Storm Drain Marking



Background

Why should people be concerned about what enters a storm drain? Because anything that makes its way down a storm drain is not “treated” before it reaches a stream or river. Oil, antifreeze, grass clippings, soil, fertilizers, pet waste and other debris on streets and sidewalks goes directly into a nearby stream, river or lake.

Consider where the water goes when you wash your car on your driveway. The soapy, dirty water runs down the street into the storm sewer, which carries the wash water to the nearest waterbody. In the water, the soap acts like a fertilizer for aquatic plants and contributes to excessive plant growth, potentially creating problems for fish and boating.

Storm drain marking helps increase awareness of the storm drain’s connection to our local water resources. Educate your community about stormwater pollution by marking storm drains with “No Dumping, Drains to Lakes” (or river or stream) and distribute informative door hangers.

By participating in this activity, your group will:

- Learn about stormwater pollution
- Understand why stormwater pollution is a threat to the environment
- Increase awareness of stormwater by marking storm drains

Interested in marking storm drains in your neighborhood?

Contact Mindy Habecker to arrange a time to pick up instructions and supplies. All supplies needed to mark storm drains will be provided.

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Safety Comes First

During a storm drain marking outing, you and your group will be in the streets using toluene-based glue. Please take precautions to protect yourselves.

- Follow traffic safety practices and be alert.
- Place the safety cones slightly out in the street where you will be working.
- Wear the safety vest provided in your marking kit.
- Assign an adult to each youth team. Do not have youth teams working alone.
- Avoid busy streets or choose a time of day when there is less traffic. Markers tend to be seen primarily by pedestrians and bicycle traffic.
- The glue can be dangerous to your health. Always wear gloves and do not allow the glue to contact your skin. Safely dispose of the used gloves and return all the adhesive tubes (even used ones) to the Water Education Resource Center (WERC) with the rest of the equipment.

Thanks for helping to protect Dane County’s lakes, streams and ground water resources!

SMALL ACTIONS MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE!

Tips for a Successful Storm Drain Marking Outing

Organizing your event

- Watch the weather. Like other outdoor projects, marking should not be done during wet or cold weather (less than 50°F). For best results, the pavement should be dry and warm.
- Review all the safety tips, cautionary statement, first aid procedures and steps involved in marking prior to beginning the actual activity.
- Youth teams need at least one adult supervising each team. Youth under 12 years of age should not participate in the gluing, but can help in the preparation for the event or door hanger distribution. A three-person team is sufficient for an all adult team.
- It takes approximately one hour for a team of three to four people to mark about ten storm drains.
- Identify team members beforehand who will distribute door hanger cards while others glue the markers.
- If your group will be marking storm drains on public streets in the City of Madison, permission has already been granted. If your group will be marking storm drains elsewhere in Dane County, call the Department of Public Works in the municipality. Be sure to ask for a letter of authorization to provide you with proof if a road crew or police officer questions you. Also be aware of storm drains on private property and be sure to ask permission whether the property is a private home, business or apartment complex.



Supplies

All of the required supplies are in the kit from the Dane County Natural Resources Education Center. In your kit, you will find:

- Storm drain markers
- Door hangers
- Wire brush
- Dust pan and brush
- Garbage bag
- Safety cones
- Safety vests
- Gloves
- Adhesive

Storm drain marking steps:



Determine Placement

Place marker above the gutter on the top of the curb. If it is not wide enough (minimum of four inches, which is the width of the marker), glue the marker to the upright portion of the curb next to the storm drain. The application surface must be flat and fairly smooth. The curb markers do not conform to uneven or curved surfaces. Do not glue the markers to the sidewalk.



Clean Surfaces

Surfaces must be clean, dry and free of any debris, grit or dust. Use the wire brush to clean the area where the marker will be applied. Use the dustpan, brush and garbage bag to properly dispose of waste and debris. Place any debris you collect from around the inlet in your trash bag. Properly dispose of trash bag at end of marking session.



Apply Adhesive

The individual who is using the adhesive should use the gloves provided. Apply adhesive to the back of the marker in a spiral fashion (see photo). Only a small amount is necessary. Too much glue will take too long to cure. Start 1/8 inch from the outside edge, applying an even bead around the entire edge, then work to the center.



Place Marker

Place the marker on the top or side of the curb. Push down HARD with a twisting motion, forcing adhesive out from the edge. It is important that the entire edge of the marker is sealed to the curb. Then stand on the marker putting all weight on that foot without moving for about 1 minute to

Return ALL adhesive tubes (empty, full or partially used) with other equipment in the marking kit to Dane County and properly dispose of trash. Dispose of soiled gloves used for adhesive.