



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT DIVISION
 650 S. Spring St., Ste 700
 Los Angeles, CA 90014
 (800) 974-9794
 www.cityofla.org/san/swmd

STORMWATER PROGRAM SPLASH



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Bureau of Sanitation

Violators Now Subject to Prosecution

City of LA Stormwater Ordinance Passes

On October 1, 1998 the Stormwater and Urban Runoff Pollution Control Ordinance became law in the City of Los Angeles. The new ordinance not only makes it a crime to discharge pollutants into the storm drain system and imposes stiff fines on violators, but now also gives City public officers the authority to issue citations or arrest business owners or residents who deliberately and knowingly dump or discharge hazardous chemicals or debris into the system.

"This ordinance was passed to enforce the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Permit which prohibits any person or business from discharging toxic or hazardous substances into the storm drain system," stated Frank Bajinting, Chief Industrial Waste Inspector for the Stormwater Management Division's Enforcement Unit. Violators will be cited with a misdemeanor and are subject to a fine of \$1,000 and/or a six-month jail term and, "violators may also be assessed the cost of clean up," he added.

3,000 Tons of Trash on Our Beaches

From an environmental standpoint, the passage of this ordinance is significant in the ongoing task of reducing the amount of pollutants flowing into the Los Angeles River, and Santa Monica and San Pedro Bays. Every year, thousands of tons of trash flow through this system from City streets and straight into our oceans. On September 25, 1997 after just one inch of rain accumulated from the first seasonal storm, 3,000 tons of trash and debris flowed through the Los Angeles River to the Pacific Ocean. In dry weather, the numbers remain just as severe. Over the course of a few dry days, 250 to 400 tons of debris can flow through the Los Angeles River and straight into the Pacific Ocean.

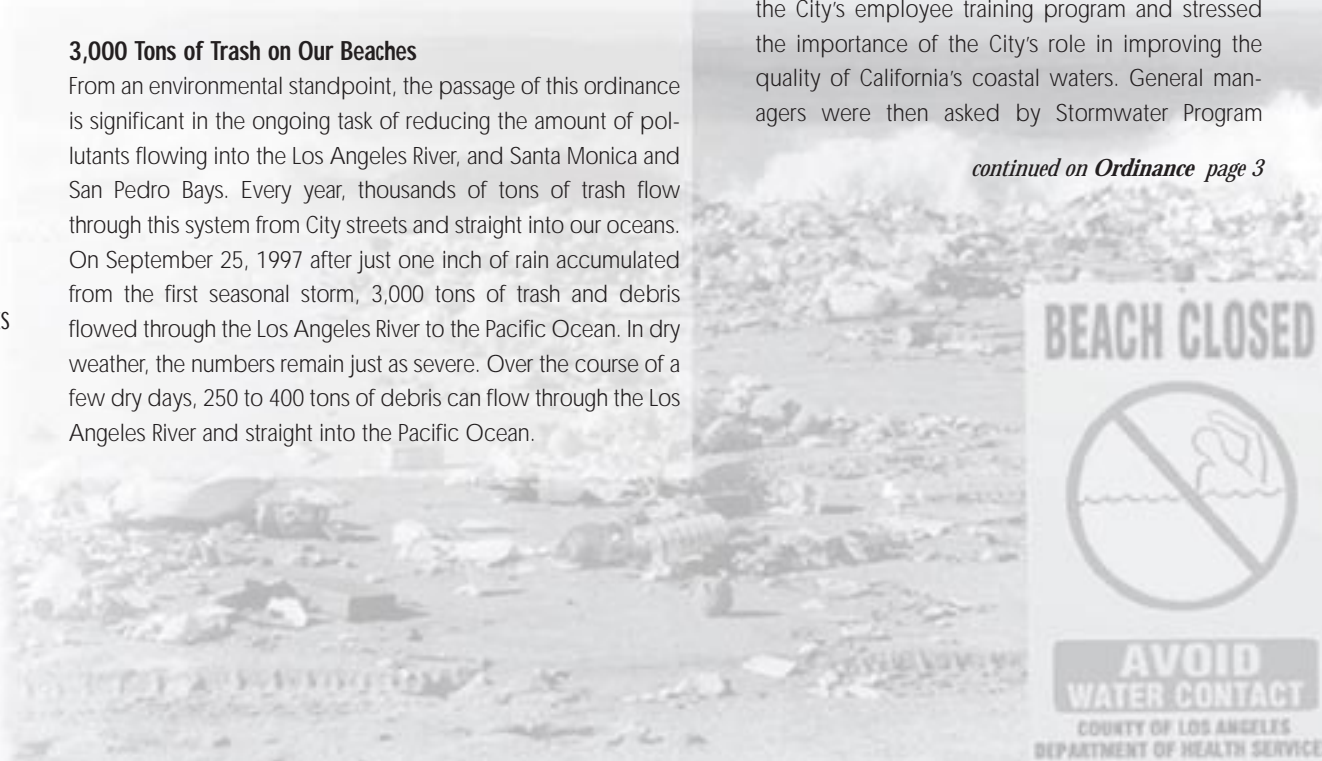


Storm drain violations as seen here, are now subject to stiff fines and penalties. The City is mounting an aggressive campaign to reduce the amount of pollutants flowing into the Santa Monica Bay (below) and surrounding coastal waters.

Mayoral Support

The passage of the Stormwater Ordinance arrives on the heels of a conference for all department general managers hosted by Mayor Richard J. Riordan earlier this year. The conference, entitled *Mayor's Breakfast on Stormwater Training and Education*, was held at the LA Convention Center where the Mayor kicked off the City's employee training program and stressed the importance of the City's role in improving the quality of California's coastal waters. General managers were then asked by Stormwater Program

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BEACH CLOSED



AVOID WATER CONTACT

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

Program Manager's Welcome

GARY LEE MOORE

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Welcome to the premiere issue of **SPLASH**, the City of Los Angeles' Stormwater Management Program's newsletter. As the new Stormwater Program Manager, I look forward to meeting the challenges in reducing the amount of polluted stormwater flowing into the Los Angeles River, and Santa Monica and San Pedro Bays, and I am excited about each milestone we reach in the requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Permit.



The NPDES Stormwater Permit is an important legal mandate we cannot ignore. By July 1999, the City must implement a variety of measures towards improving the quality of the 100 million gallons of urban runoff that passes through the storm drain system everyday. This toxic flow discharges directly into the ocean without any treatment. The Permit requires the City to implement several key actions:

- Educate City employees about stormwater pollution;
- Implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) which reduce stormwater pollution in all City operations; and,
- Adopt Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs) at certain City facilities.

In the coming months, you will be hearing more about how you can help us meet all of our NPDES Stormwater Permit requirements. It is my hope that our division will provide a forum for Stormwater Program staff to communicate important information to the rest of the City family, community and environmental groups.

I am proud of the past accomplishments of the Stormwater Program. Currently, over 20 organizations and municipalities nationwide are using materials designed and created by the team. I look forward to working with all of you in making the City a leader in eliminating stormwater pollution.

Gary Lee Moore

Director's Message

JUDITH WILSON

BUREAU OF SANITATION

The beginning of fiscal year 1998-99, heralded a new chapter in the City of Los Angeles' clean water efforts—the Stormwater Program joined the Bureau of Sanitation's family. With the arrival of the Stormwater Management Division on July 1, 1998, all program elements: City Permit Compliance, Enforcement, Pollution Abatement, Program Management and Financial Services, and Public Education now reside within the Bureau of Sanitation.



The Bureau of Sanitation's operations have supported the Stormwater Management Program in its catch basin cleaning, monitoring and research work. Annually, Sanitation crews clean over 55,000 catch basins to help reduce street flooding during rainstorms. And on a daily basis, employees from Environmental Monitoring Division sample ocean water quality at 18 coastal sites and transmit these test results to the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services to determine if beach closures are necessary.

Stormwater pollution poses a serious health risk to people swimming or fishing in the Santa Monica and San Pedro Bays. Protecting public health and safety are of paramount concern to the City of Los Angeles. Stormwater runoff, in the form of chemicals, pesticides and plastic materials, is also responsible for killing countless marine plants and animals that live in our coastal waters.

The City of Los Angeles will not only meet, but also exceed the expectations of residential, political and environmental stakeholders as we lay the foundation of a model stormwater program. Although many awards and national recognition attest to the past accomplishments and efforts of the City's Stormwater Program, we must continue working toward maximizing our efficiency and productivity.

It is my hope that everyone would take a few moments to evaluate simple behaviors both at home and work that can positively change the quality of our environment—and have a lasting impact on generations to come.

Judith A. Wilson

Preparing for Wet Weather

BY ANGELA FRANKLIN
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

As the City of Los Angeles enters another winter season, now is the time to prepare your home, neighborhood and place of business for the wet weather ahead—and help keep our ocean clean.

Rain and pollutants from our streets and neighborhoods are the number one source of ocean pollution in Santa Monica Bay. On a normal dry day, approximately 100 million gallons of contaminated water and debris, enough to fill the Rose Bowl 1.2 times, flows through the storm drain system. However, in a typical rainstorm, the daily flow can increase to 10 *billion* gallons.

Here are a few simple actions residents can take to protect the health of City neighborhoods and coastal waters:

Home

- Pick up litter and yard clippings around your home. Dispose or recycle debris in City-issued containers.
- Use pesticides and fertilizers properly. Ensure that household hazardous materials are covered or stored indoors.
- Clean up pet waste and flush it down the toilet or dispose of it in your City-issued trash container.

Business

- Cover toxic materials with tight-fitting lids and/or store them indoors.
- Clean up automotive leaks/spills with kitty litter and dispose properly.
- Sweep—don't hose or wash dirt and debris from sidewalks and walkways. And never sweep debris into catch basins.

Ordinance

continued from page 1

Manager Gary Lee Moore, to recognize the legal mandates facing the City, commit to meeting NPDES Permit deadlines and dedicate staff to the implementation of the program. Like the Ordinance, the City-employee training program is one of several measures required by the City of Los Angeles to meet NPDES Permit requirements.

Enforcement Efforts Strengthened

The Stormwater Ordinance also streamlines enforcement efforts into one area of the City of Los Angeles municipal code. Prior to the passage of this ordinance, the NPDES Permit could only be enforced through a variety of different ordinances, but none specifically addressed the crime of dumping pollutants into the storm drain system. After determining that the pre-existing Industrial Waste Control Ordinance, Section 64.33 (1944) did not adequately provide the necessary authority to enforce all provisions of the NPDES Permit, stormwater enforcement staff drafted the new ordinance language and championed its passage.

While stormwater industrial waste inspectors could issue notices of violation to polluters, they often found that the absence of a stormwater ordinance weakened their ability to pursue actual prosecution. With its passage, the City has the means to cite, fine and prosecute business owners and residents who are caught violating these laws.

Site Inspections

As another provision of the NPDES Permit, the division's inspectors conduct educational business site visits. Since early 1997, stormwater industrial waste inspectors have visited over 12,000 businesses distributing literature that outlines best management practices (BMPs) that can be adopted and advising business owners of site practices that may negatively impact urban runoff. Industries that have been visited to date include restaurants, vehicle repair and accessory shops, gasoline stations, and manufacturing facilities.

For more information about the Stormwater Ordinance, please call (213) 847-6350.



The Stormwater Management Division's Enforcement Unit regularly conduct educational business site visits and investigate reports of illegal dumping throughout the City of Los Angeles.



In a photo taken via remote controlled camera, trash over two feet deep blocks this underground storm drain pipe. Debris not only prevents proper drainage, but also invites unhealthy neighborhood conditions such as odors, rats, and as seen along the walls, roaches and other vermin.



Bureau of Sanitation crews routinely clean out the City's 55,000 catch basins and step up the frequency prior to and in anticipation of the rainy season.

Stormwater Program Website Debuts

www.cityofla.org/san/swmd

On November 23, 1998 the City of Los Angeles' Stormwater Program website debuted on the worldwide web. Designed and constructed by the division's staff artist, the site is over 20 pages in size and includes information on Best Management Practices (BMPs), a storm drain system diagram, education activities, as well as an online version of this newsletter.

Future updates to the site will include detailed descriptions of the tasks and duties relating to the stormwater program, a copy of the newly passed Stormwater ordinance, and the ongoing activities of the Public Education Program as outlined by the NPDES Stormwater Permit. Also in development is a children's interactive and activity pages section.

Many thanks to the City's **Bureau of Sanitation's Systems Division** and the **Information Technology Agency** for their help in expediting the project.



Water Cycle Teaches 370,000 Children About Stormwater Pollution

The City of Los Angeles' sponsored, assembly program **Water Cycle** reached its 370,000th child this Summer. The bilingual presentation teaches LAUSD K-6 students about stormwater pollution, recycling, the urban forest and the importance in their individual actions on how they affect the environment by using memorable and humorous characters.



"We are so proud of the quality and reach of this assembly program," remarked Commissioner Maribel Marin, Board of Public Works. "The children really respond to and interact with the assembly characters. It's a great way to teach children about an important environmental issue and entertain them simultaneously."



Produced by the environmental organization, TreePeople and performed by the professional theatrical group, Will & Company, the performance's goal is to, "raise students' knowledge about the storm drain system and the connection storm drains have to our local coastal environment." said Dr. John Dorsey, Stormwater Management

Division. "We knew of TreePeople's commitment to educating young people about the environment and decided to partner with them on this important endeavor."

In addition to **Water Cycle**, the City of Los Angeles also sponsors tours of the TreePeople facility entitled **Eco-Tours** for LAUSD students and distributes the complimentary curriculum, **The Magical City Forest**. Educational materials including bilingual pamphlets, stickers and classroom posters are also available, free of charge to Los Angeles area teachers and residents.

For information regarding these programs, please call 1-800-974-9794 and press 3 for public information items.

The Stormwater Program Newsletter will be published quarterly. If you would like to receive future issues or be included on our mailing list, please send your letter of request to:

**Stormwater Management Division
Public Education Program
650 S. Spring Street Ste 700
Los Angeles, CA 90014**

Please include your return address and/or mail stop

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: JOYCE NEAL
ANGELA FRANKLIN
LAYOUT & DESIGN: OSCAR AMARO
PHOTOGRAPHY: MICHAEL KANTOR
OSCAR AMARO

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