

Storm Water Illicit Discharge Program

An illicit discharge has been defined by the EPA as “any discharge into a separate storm sewer system that is not composed entirely of storm water.” Typically, illicit discharges enter a storm sewer system either through a direct connection to sanitary sewer piping or indirectly from cracked sanitary sewer conveyance systems, spills collected by storm drains, or contaminants dumped directly into a storm drain. Pollutants associated with illicit discharges include bacteria, paint, toxins, oil and grease, solvents and nutrients. These untreated discharges have the potential to cause significant degradation of water quality. The following are typical examples of illicit discharges:

- Sanitary wastewater
- Leaky septic tanks
- Laundry wastewater
- Commercial car wash discharges
- Improper disposal of household or automotive chemicals
- Spills from roadway accidents

The City of Reedley’s Illicit Discharge Program includes three phases: detection, investigation and elimination.

- **Detection:** The City of Reedley performs routine inspections of storm sewer systems during dry weather to ensure no water or other fluid is coming out of the storm sewer. Additionally, the City of Reedley occasionally receives public reports of illicit discharges into the storm sewer system. For every inspection performed or complaint received, the City performs a number of water quality tests to determine if an illicit discharge is present.
- **Investigation:** If results of an inspection detect that an illicit discharge is present, the City will perform further investigation to determine the source(s). Often, it is necessary to conduct physical inspections of commercial, industrial and residential properties to verify the exact source of the illicit discharge. If the source cannot be located through physical observations, the City will perform further sewer investigations.
- **Elimination:** Once the source of the illicit discharge has been determined, the City will enforce removal and correction of the illicit discharge or illegal connection. The City has developed and adopted an Urban Storm Water Quality Management Ordinance to ensure that violations are remedied promptly and consistently.

To view the City of Reedley’s Urban Storm Water Quality Management Ordinance, click [here](#).

Detecting and Reporting an Illicit Discharge

It is important that City of Reedley residents report any suspicious discharges as soon as possible. When trying to determine if what you see is an example of an illicit discharge to the separate storm water sewer system, look for: liquid flowing from pipes during dry weather, foam appearing in streams, lakes and other bodies of water, discolored water and unusual odors.

To report an illicit discharge or water quality concern, call the City of Reedley Public Works Department at (559)637-4200 ext. 214. After normal business hours, please contact the Reedley Police Department at (559)637-4250.