

Stormwater Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Where does the storm drain go?

- A. Water that flows down roads, streets, and parking lots goes into a storm drain. Some drain into a leaching pool structure or recharge basin (sump), which then leaches into the ground. Other storm drains in the downtown area flow directly to Old Mill Creek or Port Jefferson Harbor.

Q. What is the purpose of the storm drain system?

- A. Its purpose is to prevent flooding of roads and parking lots by quickly and efficiently transferring rain water into the ground or to Port Jefferson Harbor.

Q. Why are we stenciling or adding markers to storm drains with a message?

- A. Storm drain stenciling and marking are a great way to remind people that storm drains are for clean rain water only. It is a visual reminder not to dump garbage or pollutants into the storm drains since these may end up in Port Jefferson Harbor.

Q. What's the difference between putting water down the storm drain and putting water down the toilet or sink?

- A. The sanitary sewer (toilets and sinks) and storm drain system are two completely different systems. The water that goes down sinks or toilets in homes and businesses flows to the sewage treatment plant on the west side of Port Jefferson Harbor, where it is treated before its release to the Harbor. Water that flows down roads, streets, and parking lots in the downtown area flow directly to the Harbor. This water picks up garbage pollutants along the way and does not receive any treatment to remove pollutants.

Q. Who fixes clogged storm drains?

- A. The Village of Port Jefferson Highway Department at 631-473-4733.

Q. Why shouldn't yard trimmings and soil go into the storm drain?

- A. When natural materials, such as yard trimmings, break down, oxygen is drawn from the water. A lot of natural debris decomposing in water will deplete the water of oxygen needed by fish.

In addition, pesticides, oil leaked onto roads, pet waste, and other pollutants are scoured from all paved surfaces throughout our Village and are washed ultimately into Port Jefferson Harbor.

Q. Why isn't storm water treated before it goes into Old Mill Creek or the Harbor?

A. Each storm drain goes to one of the twenty outfalls that discharge to Old Mill Creek or Port Jefferson Harbor. As a result, storm water is not collected into one location where it can be cleaned. Preventing pollution at the source is a much more effective and less costly way to prevent storm water pollution.

Q. What do I do if I see someone dumping something other than rain water down a storm drain?

A. Call Code Enforcement at 631-774-0066.

Q. What do I do if I see water and mud flowing from a construction site onto the street?

A. Call the Building Department at 631-473-4744.

Q. If I leave a complaint, will my name and address be kept confidential?

A. Yes, all information will be kept confidential.