

Illicit Discharge & Detection Handout

For Employees, Businesses and the General Public

Obvious Discharges

Occasionally an obvious illicit discharge of sewage or other pollutants may be encountered. Illicit discharges typified by high turbidity, odors, floatables and unusual colors. When obvious discharges are encountered, immediately contact the appropriate water pollution agency for enforcement.

- 1.) Pipe outfalls include any pipes or small, constructed channels that discharge into the stream through the stream corridor. Pipe outfalls are considered a potential environmental problem in the survey because they can carry uncontrolled runoff and pollutants such as oil, heavy metals and nutrients to a stream system.

Physical indicators found at both flowing and non-flowing outfalls that can reveal the impact of past discharges.

- Bacterial growth can indicate nutrient enrichment and sewage can be a likely source.
- Bright red bacterial growth often indicates high manganese and iron concentrations. This is not typically associated with illicit discharge.
- Sporoliths filamentous bacteria, also known as “sewage fungus” can be used to track down sanitary sewer leaks.
- Brownish algae can indicate elevated nutrient levels.

- 2.) A catch basin is an inlet to the storm drain system that typically includes a grate or curb inlet and a sump to capture sediment, debris and associated pollutants. They are used in roads to intercept road surface drainage and to capture and settle some solids before water is discharged back into a detention basin or drainage areas. The performance of catch basins at removing sediment and other pollutants depends on maintenance procedures to retain the storage available in the sump to capture sediment. Unclean catch basins may contribute sediment to the receiving stream. Unless frequently maintained, catch basins can become a source of pollutants through re-suspension.

- 3.) Detention basins in storm water Best Management Practice (BMP) are designed to reduce the impacts of pollutants and increased storm water on local streams caused by development. They are an essential part of Town of Somers effort to

improve the quality of our streams, rivers and lakes; however detention basins will fail prematurely if not properly maintained.

The basin will serve as a sediment trap during road and drainage system construction and during construction of the majority of homes. The Town of Somers will monitor the collection of sediment and order its removal when the level of sediment is such that it will impede the operation of the outlet structure.