



Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) Ordinance Overview Factsheet

Purpose:

Ever notice that when it rains swimming beaches and shellfish beds close? What about all that trash we all see along our rivers, bays and ponds, where does it all come from? When rain falls on our roads, roofs, driveways and parking lots it collects pollutants from these surfaces and then flows into the [town/city] storm drain system. Once that rain water, which is called stormwater runoff, flows down into the storm drain it flows to our wetlands, rivers, ponds and the Bay. No filters, no treatment.

The IDDE ordinance now before the city/town council is aimed at addressing this issue. Cities and towns in Rhode Island that are covered under the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Protection (RIDEM) Phase II permit are addressing many stormwater concerns. Under this permit we are required to pass an ordinance prohibiting connections from sewers, septic tanks, washers, and other potentially unclean water sources to our storm drains. These connections are called Illicit Connections and will be prohibited under the new ordinance. Additionally, the ordinance will give the city/town the authority to enforce this ordinance.

What do I have to do under the new ordinance?

Many of the requirements under the new ordinance will be aimed at commercial and industrial facilities in our city/town. These facilities must address stormwater runoff from their facilities, have a spill prevention plan and keep any water bodies (stream, lakes, bays) clear of trash and lawn clippings. They must also make sure they do not have any illegal interconnections with the storm drain system.

Residents will be responsible for making sure they do not have any illegal interconnections with the storm drain system. Prohibited discharges include but are not limited to: connections from sewers, drain fields, septic tanks, wash water from laundry washers, or any connections from indoor sinks and drains. These sources should not be connected to the storm drain system, if you suspect that you have an illegal interconnection you will have to remove it by contacting a licensed plumber. Legal discharges include: dechlorinated pool water, air conditioning condensate, lawn watering, foundation or footing drains and sump pumps used to dewater basements (assuming there is not contamination of the water). The basic thing to remember is that only rain goes down the storm drain, other sources of water are probably illegal.

For more information:

Check out our city/town stormwater website [website address].

