

WHAT IS STORMWATER ?

Stormwater is rain or snowmelt that runs off surfaces. Such surfaces may include rooftops, roads, graveled areas, and parking lots, as well as farms, soccer fields, and lawns.

HOW DOES LONGVIEW HANDLE STORMWATER ?

The City has an extensive storm sewer that collects stormwater and conveys it to the Cowlitz Consolidated Diking District #1 (CDID #1). Their network of ditches and pumps delivers the run-off to the Cowlitz and Columbia rivers.

WHY IS STORMWATER IMPORTANT ?

Built on river lowlands and protected by a ring of dikes, stormwater collection and conveyance is important for Longview. In addition, Stormwater returns to groundwater, surface waters, or the atmosphere. Stormwater is the leading cause of urban water quality impairment and often contributes to water pollution elsewhere. It affects:

Water Quantity (Exacerbates erosion, flooding, and drought). Runoff in unnatural systems may flow too fast causing erosion or floods. Less water may be retained for groundwater replenishment or be available later for streams and wet areas in drier months.

Water Quality (Contaminates, Temperature)

- ❖ Human Health (drinking and recreation waters).
- ❖ Environmental Health (persistence of some contaminants, effects on fish, plants and wildlife).



WHAT CAN YOU DO ?

Stormwater is typically a non-point source of pollution, implying that sources are diffuse. Altering a watershed – such as development and clearing vegetation – is the leading cause of stormwater pollution. Support managed development and replant with trees and native vegetation. Simple and interesting ideas are plentiful, but just know that what we 300 million Americans do not flush to the sanitary sewer system or properly dispose of becomes part of the environment. For more information, visit:

- Longview’s Stormwater webpage at www.cleanstormwater.org, or
- Agency webpages such as: www.epa.gov and www.ecy.wa.gov

WHAT ELSE IS BEING DONE ?

In 1987, Congress changed the Clean Water Act by requiring stormwater from larger sources to have a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination (NPDES) permit. The permits require the development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

- Construction – The plans focus on temporary erosion and sediment control.
- Industry – The focus is on how to identify, prevent, and control contamination.
- Cities – SWPPP’s aim to reduce discharge of pollutants, reduce impacts to receiving waters, eliminate illicit discharges, and make progress towards compliance with surface water, groundwater, and sediment standards.

In 1999, the final (Phase II) stormwater regulations were completed by the EPA. They require smaller municipalities to develop stormwater programs that address

- Public education & outreach
- Illicit discharge detection & elimination
- Public participation/involvement
- Construction site run-off control
- New development run-off control
- Pollution prevention & good housekeeping by city operation