



A General Guide to Stormwater at GSFC



Stormwater, a Loaded Word

It begins modestly, as anything made of water falling from the sky. It can fall gently or ferociously, in a slurry, frozen, or room temperature. Either way it falls, stormwater ends up loaded. The loading occurs as runoff from land, rooftops, and other impervious surfaces carries a mix of oil and grease, fertilizer, sediment, etc., into storm drains and surface waters. In undeveloped areas, stormwater infiltrates the ground and replenishes aquifers, is absorbed by plants, or meanders across the landscape to surface waters. In developed areas, impervious

surfaces, such as roof tops, parking lots, walkways, and roads prevent stormwater from infiltrating the ground. In a recent study conducted by the US Geological Survey it was determined that even the addition of ten percent impervious surface in an undeveloped area, can cause a significant decline in aquatic life.

Stormwater Regulations at GSFC

GSFC holds an individual National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and a General Permit for Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s). GSFC's NPDES permit, issued by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), requires the Center to develop and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which describes practices to be used to reduce the pollutants in stormwater discharges associated with industrial activity. GSFC's MS4 requires the Center to develop and implement best management practices (BMPs) and achieve measurable goals. These measures reduce the amount of pollutants in stormwater runoff discharged into local receiving waters.



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GSFC's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan

Goddard's SWPPP is a compliance document that lists and describes activities at GSFC subject to stormwater regulations. The SWPPP identifies potential sources of pollution to stormwater discharges, and provides BMPs designed to prevent, control, or minimize the potential for pollution from these sources. Examples of BMPs include routine visual inspections, preventative maintenance on equipment, and good housekeeping.



Spills

We like rainbows in the sky, not on the ground. Any release of petroleum products, antifreeze, etc., onto our roadways, parking lots, pavement, grass, is detrimental to water quality. One quart of oil can contaminate one million gallons of water. Because of this GSFC takes great care to ensure that only stormwater goes down our storm drains and into our waterways. However, accidents do happen. All oil and petroleum product spills, including oil leaks from vehicles traveling on Center (personal and government vehicles), no matter how small, must be reported immediately so that

appropriate regulatory reporting and clean up can be accomplished.

Report spills immediately by calling 911 or 301-286-9111 from a cell phone.

Please visit the link below for more information on GSFC's stormwater management.

http://code250.gsfc.nasa.gov/environmental/water_storm.html

http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=6

<http://www.epa.gov/weatherchannel/stormwater.html>

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