



# Allen County Surveyor's Office Storm Drain Marking Guide

The Allen County Surveyor's Office has established a storm drain marking program to involve and educate the community of the harms of dumping pollutants down the storm drains. The following guidelines are provided to assist individuals, groups or organizations in planning, implementing, and preparing a successful storm drain marking event and to provide information on what citizens can do to prevent or reduce pollution that enters our waterways through storm drains.

## What is a Storm Drain?

A storm drain is a network of underground pipes designed to control flooding by transporting stormwater from urban areas to a waterbody. The storm drain marking program involves marking storm drain inlets. The following are typical examples of storm inlets.



## What is Storm Drain Marking?

Storm drain marking is labeling a storm drain inlet with a pre-printed marker, tile, sticker, or stencil that reads "Dump No Waste - Drains to River", "Drains to Stream", or a similar written message that specifies the waterbody to which the storm drain inlet drains. Allen County has chosen a vinyl marker that comes in circular or rectangular form that is applied to the inlet with an adhesive or tie straps depending on the type of inlet being marked.

## Why Should We Mark Storm Drains?

- Storm drain marking informs others about the *street-to-river* connection.

- Many people may not realize that water flowing into storm drains or any material that is dumped or washes into the storm drains is not treated before it empties into a river, stream, or pond.
- Materials such as fertilizers that are dumped or are washed into storm drains that flow to a neighborhood pond can cause pollution to that pond and an unsightly algal bloom in that pond before the water is discharged from the pond to a waterway.
- Polluted runoff or the dumping of pollutants such as oil, paints, fertilizers, grass clippings, pet wastes, household chemicals, etc., can pollute Allen County's waterways and ponds where we fish, swim, and obtain our drinking water.
- Storm drain marking can be an effective service learning or civic learning project for schools, scout groups, homeowner associations, 4-H clubs, municipalities, or any organization wanting to make a positive impact on their community.

### **Doing a Storm Drain Marking Project**

- A.) The first step involved in planning a storm drain marking event or in marking the storm drains as an individual is to fill out an Allen County Surveyor's Office Storm Drain Marking Application Form and to have everyone that will be involved with marking storm drains sign an Allen County Surveyor's Office Storm Drain Marking Liability Waiver Form. If a storm drain marking event is being hosted, the event organizer should send in the Application Form and have everyone sign the Liability Waiver Form the day of the event **before** going out to mark the storm drains. Both of these forms should be returned to the Allen County Surveyor's Office. **An organized storm drain marking event for a neighborhood or subdivision should be scheduled to allow for a representative from the Allen County Surveyor's Office to be present.**
- B.) Upon receipt of the forms described above, the Allen County Surveyor's Office will send the necessary storm drain markers, curb marker adhesive and/or tie straps, instructions, and a map of the locations of the inlets within the project area.
- C.) If an event is planned or several volunteers will be involved in storm drain marking, divide the project area into smaller work sections to which you can assign an individual or a pair of volunteers for each section. Provide each group of volunteers with the necessary markers and supplies as follows:
- **Storm drain markers (both circular type and rectangular type)**
  - **Adhesive glue and/or tie straps**
  - **Marker installation instructions**
  - **Map of inlet locations**
- D.) Inform volunteers to bring safety vests or wear a bright t-shirt when out marking drains along the streets. Make sure to watch for oncoming traffic. Inform volunteers to bring a wire brush or broom to use to scrub the surface where the marker will be placed to remove any loose debris.

- E.) Due to private property concerns, inlets found in private yards should only be marked with a representative from the Allen County Surveyor's Office being present.
- F.) When using youth volunteers, provide at least one adult with each youth volunteer or group of youth volunteers to provide supervision.

### Installation of Markers

There are two types of storm drain markers to install. The circular type markers are installed with adhesive and are used for street inlets and storm drains that have a flat surface with enough surface area to accommodate the marker. The rectangular type markers are used on the beehive type inlets that are often found in yards and swales. **Due to private property concerns, inlets found in private yards should only be marked with a representative from the Allen County Surveyor's Office being present.**

The following pictures illustrate both types of markers.



The following are installation guidelines to be followed for installing the circular markers:

#### 1. Clean Surface

Make sure application surface is flat, dry and free of any loose debris.



## 2. Apply Adhesive

Coming in 1/8" from the outside edge of the marker, apply a bead of adhesive and then work in to the center.



## 3. Stick It!

Apply the marker to the application surface pushing down HARD forcing adhesive out around the entire edge. It is important that the entire edge of the marker is sealed to the application surface.



The following installation procedures are to be used for attaching the rectangular storm drain markers to a beehive type inlet structure:

- 1.) Place storm drain marker on the top portion of the beehive inlet.
- 2.) Insert black tie strap through hole within the storm drain marker.
- 3.) Wrap tie strap around inlet rib and through tie strap zip lock. Fasten Snugly.
- 4.) Cut off excess length of tie strap (optional).
- 5.) Repeat steps 2 - 4 for second hole of storm drain marker.

## What Are Some Other Things You Can Do?

### 1. Sweep, instead of hosing off the driveway, street, or sidewalk.

Water run-off from driveways or sidewalks carries contaminants, such as dirt, motor oil, fertilizers, and animal waste, through storm drains and into waterways.

### 2. Lawn and garden chemicals.

Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly and follow the directions recommended by the manufacture. Do not apply fertilizers or pesticides before a rain event.

### 3. Safely dispose of household cleaners and motor oil.

Many automotive and cleaning products found in homes or garages are too dangerous to be disposed of in the trash or down the drain. Products should be recycled or taken to a community hazardous waste center.

### 4. Compost or mulch yard waste.

Sweep (do not wash) leaves or grass clippings that accumulate on your driveway, sidewalk, or in the street.

### 5. Clean up after your pet.

Pick up pet wastes and put it into the trash.

### 6. Do not wash your car in the driveway.

Use a commercial car wash or wash your car on the lawn or other unpaved surface to minimize the amount of dirty, soapy water flowing into the storm drain and into waterways.

### 7. Safely dispose of paint

Clean paint brushes in the sink not outdoors. Properly dispose of excess paint.

For questions or additional information about storm drain marking, please call the Allen County Surveyor's Office at 260-449-7625.

Thank You!