

What is Stormwater?

Stormwater runoff is generated when precipitation from rain and snowmelt events flows over land or impervious surfaces and does not percolate into the ground. As the runoff flows over the land or impervious surfaces (paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops), it accumulates debris, chemicals, sediment or other pollutants that could adversely affect water quality if the runoff is discharged untreated.

Stormwater management involves the control of water that runs off the surface of the land from rain or melting ice or snow. The volume, or amount of runoff and its rate of runoff, substantially increase as land development occurs. Construction of impervious surfaces, and the installation of storm sewer pipes which efficiently collect and discharge runoff, prevent the infiltration of rainfall into the soil. Management of stormwater is necessary to compensate for the possible impacts of development such as frequent flooding, erosion and sedimentation problems, concentration of flow on adjacent properties, damages to roads, bridges and other infrastructure as well as non-point source pollution washed off from impervious surfaces. The primary method to control stormwater discharges is the use of best management practices (BMPs).