

# What does MS4 mean to Hanover?

The City of Hanover has become part of the MS4 program, or the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System.

MS4 programs are a requirement by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for cities with populations of 50,000 or more, some smaller designated cities such as Hanover, and other public entities that have significant stormwater drainage systems. The goal of the MS4 program is to improve water quality by reducing pollutants in stormwater discharges.

Hanover has been designated an MS4 because its stormwater system is located in an urban area that meets the criteria established in the State Rule for population and discharge points. In addition, Hanover has an impaired waterway, the Crow River, which also designates the City for the program. Hanover's stormwater infrastructure includes curbs, ditches, culverts, stormwater ponds and storm sewer pipes. The focus will be to reduce the pollution that enters these systems and discharges to



wetlands, streams, rivers, and lakes.

Stormwater, especially in urban areas, frequently contains litter, oil, chemicals, bacteria and excess nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorous. These pollutants contribute to excess algae growth, poor water quality, and to advisories against eating fish. Poorly managed stormwater systems can also alter the natural flow and infiltration of water, affect stream or river banks, and harm or eliminate aquatic organisms and ecosystems.

The City of Hanover has a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program which has been recently put in place. Components of the program include:

- Public education and outreach including teaching residents about better stormwater management.
- Public participation where residents will be included in solving stormwater pollution problems. A public meeting and annual report will also be held as part of this requirement.
- Implementation of a plan to detect and eliminate illicit discharges to the stormwater system.
- Implementation of construction site runoff controls.
- Implementation of post-construction site runoff controls.

- Pollution prevention and municipal “good housekeeping” measures such as street sweeping and covering salt piles.

Residents in Hanover can already start planning changes to reduce stormwater pollution and improve the quality of the area's water. Residents can sweep grass clippings and rake leaves away from the curbs. If the curb is clean, the water has less chance of carry pollutants. Fertilize the lawn with phosphorous-free fertilizer and don't overspray it into the street. Residents can also make sure that discharge from gutters or sump pumps is going onto the lawn and not into the street.

Residents will be informed when public educational meetings will be held and additional ways they can help prevent stormwater pollution.



Pollution in stormwater is NOT treated before it reaches streams or rivers.