



Engineering

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## 2021 MS4 Stormwater Pollution Prevention Overview

### What is an MS4?

MS4 stands for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System and is the network of stormwater drainage infrastructure that the City of Duluth owns and maintains to collect and convey stormwater runoff. Stormwater is typically conveyed through an MS4 into and directly into a receiving water. Receiving waters in the City of Duluth include Lake Superior, St. Louis Bay Estuary and many local streams. Stormwater runoff is separate from Sanitary Sewer from households. Sanitary sewer flows are conveyed through a separate system to WLSSD for treatment.

### Pollution Prevention

Pollution prevention practices are needed because stormwater runoff is largely untreated before flowing to receiving waters. The City of Duluth employs a number of methods to target pollution prevention through guidelines set by the MPCA in the City's MS4 Permit. These guidelines are broken into six (6) Minimum Control Measures (MCMs). The City performs, and partners with other agencies, on actions to prevent pollution along these guidelines.

### City of Duluth MCMs

#### 1. Public Education and Outreach

Each year the City of Duluth partners with local area agencies and authorities to distribute messages about pollution prevention in stormwater through a collaborative group named the Regional Stormwater Protection Team (RSPT). Some of these messages include a direct focus on smart salting to reduce impacts of the use of chlorides as a deicer, keeping leaf litter off of the street and out of catch basins, and messages on picking up after pets to improve water quality. For more information visit - <https://www.lakesuperiorstreams.org/stormwater/rspt.html>

In 2021 RSPT and the City of Duluth took a direct focus on yard waste and litter, running many targeted public service announcements with local television stations in an effort to educate the public on the harmful effects of each. More information on these educational topics and videos can be found at. <https://www.poopfairy.university/>

#### 2. Public Participation/Involvement

The City of Duluth engages the community through events that help deliver a message about items that improve water quality. This spring the City of Duluth partnered with Keep Duluth Clean where the community came together to pick up trash in Duluth and the Twin Ports area.

[www.duluthmn.gov](http://www.duluthmn.gov)

The City of Duluth is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Information about the various Keep Duluth Clean (KDC) efforts can be found here - <https://www.keepduluthclean.org/>

In the fall of 2021 the City also was awarded a grant in from the MnDNR's Lake Superior Coastal Program and with technical assistance from Americorps Vista and MN GreenCorps Members was able to implement the first ever Lake Superior Stormwater Chalk Fest. Chalk Fest was an event that engaged community youth and adults alike to literally "draw" attention to stormwater pollution and prevention efforts. This community exercise asked participants to illustrate their connection to water and provided chalk and logistical assistance to help make that action come true. The event had over 300 participants and included 15 groups! A few photos of art from the event are shown below.





The City of Duluth also welcomes comments or questions around the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). To discuss or comment on the SWPPP please contact Ryan Granlund at [rgranlund@duluthmn.gov](mailto:rgranlund@duluthmn.gov) or 218-730-4088.

### **3. Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE)**

Illicit discharge is the discharge of a pollutants into the City's storm sewer system or a receiving water. The City of Duluth conducts regular inspections and maintenance of storm sewer infrastructure in an effort to detect and eliminate any signs or sources of pollution. The City responds to all concerns of illicit discharge and follows up with cleaning and enforcement where necessary. Things to watch for are water coming from out of a manhole lid, odd odors or discolored water/discharges, and blatant dumping of materials that could runoff into public water through the storm system or otherwise. Any concerns of illicit discharge in the City of Duluth should be promptly reported by calling 218-730-4130.

### **4. Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control**

The City of Duluth requires an Erosion Control Permit for all construction activities that disturb more than 3,000 s.f. or is within a shoreland zone. The City conducts regular inspections of construction sites within its jurisdiction to ensure that measures are in place to minimize erosion and discharge of sediment and other pollutants in stormwater runoff during construction activity. Additionally, all proposed construction sites undergo a review process with City staff to ensure that there are erosion control measures designed for each site. All construction site stormwater concerns can be directed to City of Duluth Engineering at 218-730-5200.

### **5. Post-Construction Stormwater Management**



The City of Duluth's Unified Development Chapter contains stormwater management requirements for all new and redevelopment projects that impact 3,000 sq.ft. or more. These requirements are combined with the MPCA Construction Stormwater Activities Permit for development projects that exceed an acre of new impervious surface area. The City conducts plan reviews and approves the stormwater management plan for all projects prior to construction. The City of Duluth requires the installation of structural stormwater management practices that provide rate, volume, temperature and water quality controls for stormwater runoff from the proposed development.

The City is also actively partnered with the Duluth Urban Watershed Advisory Committee in an effort to fund a green infrastructure code audit with the goal of improving regulatory access to environmentally friendly infrastructure.

## **6. Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping**

The City of Duluth practices pollution prevention through a variety of efforts in its typical municipal operations. The City owns and maintains over a hundred stormwater runoff Best Management Practices (BMPs) that manage runoff through a variety of means including improving water quality, reducing rate of runoff and capturing pollutants. Many of these BMP's are cleared of sediment, trash and debris annually in an effort to protect our public waters. The City also maintains a large network of storm sewer infrastructure in an effort to reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater. Additionally, the City's Street Maintenance Staff is focused and committed on reducing the use of chlorides during winter maintenance through staff training, and acquisition of equipment and technology that will aide in that venture. Stormwater management is a daily part of most of the City's Divisions. This includes everything from maintenance of City parks, facility maintenance and ensuring vehicles and equipment are maintained and not leaking.

The City was also recently awarded the assistance of a MN GreenCorps Service Member whose direct tasks include identifying feasible locations to incorporate green infrastructure that utilizes native planting to help uptake stormwater pollutants and treat stormwater prior to discharge to our water resources. There are also continued efforts to seek grant funding to help develop a comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan that will identify management needs and help plan to address vulnerabilities in Duluth communities that will develop throughout climate change.

For more information on other practices of pollution prevention contact Ryan Granlund at [rgranlund@duluthmn.gov](mailto:rgranlund@duluthmn.gov) or 218-730-4088.