



November 2009

Illicit Discharges Gone Wild



Thank you to Marc Allan, Tom Mienke (PC Public Works), and the Code Enforcement Division for reporting possible illicit discharges.

Algae Blooms



You may have noticed in the news that algae blooms have been occurring in Tampa Bay or you may have even seen them in your back yard pond. Algae blooms often cause adverse effects to the aquatic environment by lowering the oxygen content in the water column. Algae blooms can cause fish kills, noxious odors, and water clarity problems and can be affected by our individual actions.

Things you can do as an individual help to prevent algae blooms:



Use fertilizer wisely. Nutrients (such as Nitrogen and Phosphorus) are found within fertilizers. When not absorbed by your yard plants these nutrients are usually directed to the nearest waterbody by stormwater runoff. This increase of nutrients in the waterbody accelerates the growth of algae and other undesirable vegetation.

- To minimize impacts do not apply fertilizer within 10 feet of a waterbody, use native species, use only slow release fertilizers when needed, do not excessively water-in fertilizer, and sweep excess fertilizer that land on roads and sidewalks back into vegetated areas. Please contact the Pinellas County Extension at (727) 582-2100 or check their website <http://pinellas.ifas.ufl.edu> for specifics regarding the proper use of fertilizers.



Yard waste (leaves, grass clippings, and tree trimmings) can also get washed into a waterbody where they then decompose. The nutrients found within these materials get released during decomposition which accelerates the growth of algae and other undesirable vegetation.

- Dispose of yard waste through your local waste service provider or compost into mulch
- Use a mulching blade and leave grass clippings on lawn



Many detergents contain Phosphorus which gets directed into waterbodies via the runoff from car washing.

- Use Phosphorus free detergents
- Wash vehicles at commercial car washes which recycle wash water.
- When washing vehicles at home, wash them over a pervious (absorbent) surface such as dirt, gravel, or grass to prevent runoff into the stormdrain system.



There are 86,924 Licensed Dogs and 40,831 Licensed Cats in Pinellas County. All this waste adds up to quite a “load”. Nutrients and bacteria from animal waste can get washed into waterbodies through stormwater discharges, which can contribute to algae blooms and water that is unsafe to swim in.

- Please collect and properly dispose of domestic pet waste.
- To learn more and get your free clean up kit visit Pooches for the Planet at <http://www.tbep.org/>

Pet waste Video: <http://www.stormwater.ucf.edu/research/petwaste.htm>

Contact Information for possible illicit discharges (727) 464-4425:

Chip Heintz, cheintz@pinellascounty.org

Bill Sova, wsova@pinellascounty.org

Stormwater Watchline (727) 464-5060

Complaints received from incorporated (city) jurisdictions will be forwarded.

See webpage for a crossword challenge: www.epa.gov/reg4gmpo/pdf/Runoff_Placemat.pdf

For more information on stormwater and Pinellas County water quality visit the water atlas www.pinellas.wateratlas.usf.edu/stormwaterEd/

For waste disposal information call Pinellas County Solid Waste- (727) 464-7500.
www.pinellascounty.org/Utilities/departments/solid-waste.htm

Illicit Discharge Training Video:

<http://vstreamint.co.pinellas.fl.us:8080/ramgen/illegaldischarges.rm>