



# Phase II Stormwater Program

Summer 2014

## *Illicit Discharge What is it and why is it a problem?*

What is an Illicit Discharge? An illicit discharge is “Any discharge that is not composed entirely of storm water, except discharges pursuant to an NPDES Permit and discharges that are specifically excepted from this policy.” That is the definition from the “Erosion and Sediment Control Policy of The City of Phenix City, Amended and Adopted by Ordinance 2007-07 on February 21, 2007.”

Discharges that are exempt from this policy include: water line flushing, landscape irrigation, uncontaminated ground water infiltration, uncontaminated pumped groundwater, discharges from potable water sources, foundation drains, air conditioning condensate, rising ground water, springs, water from crawl space pumps, footing drains, individual residential car washing, residual street wash water, discharge or flow from firefighting activities, **dechlorinated** swimming pool discharges, and any discharge authorized by and in compliance with a separate NPDES permit.

### **Check it out!!**

The new Erosion and Sediment Control page has links to very informative websites. This month we have added links to **Alabama Flood Watch**, which has information on rainfall and flood stages, and **Alabama Sinkholes**, which explains the varied causes of sinkholes and what you as a property owner can do about them. (did you know that sinkholes are protected under Alabama Law?).

### **Go to:**

[www.phenixcityal.us](http://www.phenixcityal.us), click on Departments, then Engineering & Public Works. Select Erosion & Sediment Control.

Common discharges that **are not** permitted are: Chlorinated swimming pools, washing machines, commercial car and truck washes, chemicals, trash, sewage, yard clippings, debris, oils—cooking or petroleum products, grease, paints, solvents, detergents, cleaners, pet waste, pesticides, and fertilizers. Storm drains discharge to the watershed. They do not go through a treatment facility, so anything put down a storm drain winds up in our creeks, lakes, streams, and rivers. This causes problems with water quality. Many streams and lakes can no longer support life due to the poor quality of the water. How many of the places where we fished and played as a kid still exist now? How many of them are now “dead” creeks or lakes? We can prevent future occurrences by stopping the problems. These discharges are prohibited through our Erosion and Sediment Control Policy, and also are prohibited under state law. The penalties for conviction are clearly stated in our Policy and can include fines and/or imprisonment.

The Engineering Department conducts water testing from randomly chosen storm drains in order to identify areas where illicit discharges are occurring. We also test when we are called about a potential problem. If you know of illicit discharges, please report them. You may report problems using our Action Center located at **phenixcityal.us** or by calling the Engineering Department at **334 448 2760**. If you would like to remain anonymous, we will not release any information that you share with us.

If you would like more information or have any questions, please contact the Engineering Department. We are glad to answer your questions and provide what information we can.

