

MS4 PERMIT: MUNICIPAL SEPARATE STORM SEWER SYSTEM

THE PERMIT FOR PREVENTING STORMWATER POLLUTION!

WHAT IS AN MS4 PERMIT?

The Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program was administrated through the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) in 1999. Pennsylvania implemented state regulation of the MS4 permit in 2003. The goal of the MS4 program is to prevent stormwater pollution from entering nearby waterbodies. Municipalities are required through the EPA and PADEP to implement a stormwater management program comprising of 6 Minimum Control Measures (MCMs) that help with the overall goal. The 6 MCMs include the following:

#1 Public Education & Outreach Program

- Educate the public on stormwater pollution and prevention. Distribution of stormwater educational materials can occur through bulletin boards, newsletters, magazines, public meetings, websites, and social media.

#2 Public Involvement & Participation Program

- Promote environmentally friendly activities for public participation. A few examples are planting days, cleanup programs, storm drain stenciling, and recycling collection events.

#3 Illicit Discharge, Detection & Elimination

- Develop, implement, and enforce a program to detect and eliminate illicit non-stormwater discharges and include prohibition of illicit discharges in the stormwater management ordinance.
- Prepare a comprehensive map of the municipal storm sewer system and conduct outfall screenings during dry weather to identify if illicit discharges are occurring.

#4 Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control

- The goal of this MCM is to reduce stormwater pollution from construction sites. In Pennsylvania, Municipalities typically rely on PA DEP's statewide program that requires the local county conservation district to undertake these tasks.



#5 Post-Construction Stormwater Management

- Encourage low impact development in construction projects and enact and enforce a stormwater management ordinance for post-construction stormwater management.
- Implement a program for operation and maintenance of private and municipal-owned stormwater best management practices (BMPs). These stormwater BMPs include dry ponds, wet ponds, rain gardens, underground tanks, etc.

#6 Pollution Prevention & Good House Keeping

- Educate and train municipal staff to prevent and reduce stormwater pollution from operational activities such as winter road maintenance, material storage, street sweeping, leaf collection, and lawn mowing.
- Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for each operational activity that can contribute to stormwater runoff.



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