

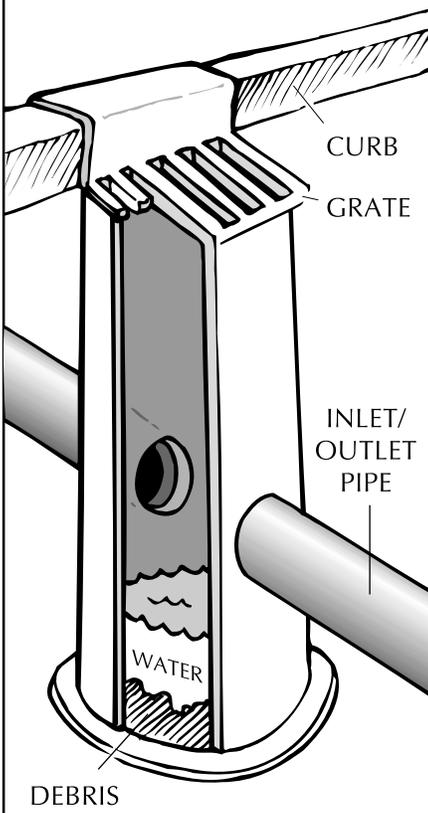


# Catch Basin Care

## Why be concerned?

Catch basins are structures located where surface water enters a storm drain or where pipes intersect. Their main function is to collect runoff and convey it into the stormwater management system. Many are also designed to let sediment and other debris settle into a storage area at the bottom of the catch basin. This helps prevent debris from flowing into the drainage system.

It's important to maintain catch basins. In addition to preventing storm sewer blockages, proper maintenance prevents accumulated pollutants from being stirred up during storms and washed through the system into rivers and streams.



## Removing Debris from Storm Drain Grates

Storm drain grates can become clogged with litter or leaves, especially in the spring and fall. Regular inspection and removal of debris can help prevent blockages that can lead to localized flooding as well as downstream pollution.

## The Importance of Regular Inspections

If you own or maintain a business site, inspect catch basins at least twice a year to see if they need cleaning. Regular inspection and cleaning prevents debris from accumulating in the outlet pipe, and reduces maintenance expense.

To find out how much material has accumulated in the storage area of your catch basin, insert a long, thin probe into the storm drain grate. Notice where the probe hits the debris and continue probing to the bottom to estimate how deep the accumulation is.

## Cleaning Catch Basins

Catch basins should be cleaned out before the storage area is half full. Once this level is reached, solids begin to be washed out in rain storms. Cleaning should be done in the spring, after the first large rain event, in the fall after the trees have shed their leaves, and additionally if needed.

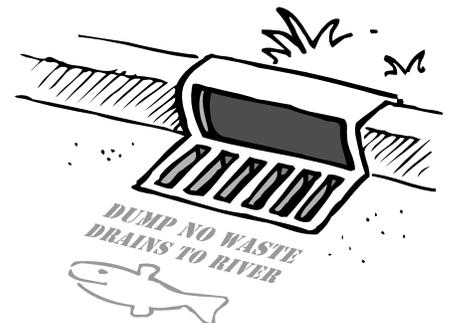
If the catch basin is shallow enough you may be able to clean it out yourself with a shovel and bucket. Be careful not to drop the basin's cover down the opening when you remove it — it can be extremely hard to retrieve. If you can't perform your catch basin maintenance, professional services are available.

## Disposing of Excavated Material

Solids removed from catch basins may be high in pollutants such as oil, metals, chemicals, nutrients, and bacteria. To determine how to properly dispose of these solids, contact the waste disposal facility where you expect them to be taken. Hiring a professional service to maintain your catch basins can help to ensure that solid wastes are properly disposed.

## Stenciling Your Storm Drains

Stenciled or decal messages applied with adhesive that read *Keep It Clean, Drains to Stream* are a good reminder that nothing but water belongs down a storm drain. Community Partners for Healthy Streams will lend stencils or provide decal resources for use by program participants.



## GETTING HELP

Cobb County  
Stormwater Management .. (770) 419-6435  
Water Quality Section .... (770) 419-6441

Community Partners for  
Healthy Streams ..... (770) 528-1482