

FACT SHEET

A joint effort of the City of Albuquerque, Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo and Flood Control Authority, University of New Mexico, New Mexico Department of Transportation, Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District, South Sandoval County Flood Control District, Bernalillo County

History

- Clean Water Act (CWA) of the mid to late 70s (to ensure that surface waters of the USA would be suitable for human sports and recreation by 1983. The CWA required permits from the **N**ational **P**ollution **D**ischarge **E**limination **S**ystem (NPDES).
- Amendments in 1987 to the CWA required industrial and municipal stormwater discharges to apply for and receive permits to discharge to “waters of the US.” This program is called the **M**unicipal **S**eparate **S**torm **S**ewer **S**ystem (MS4). The first permits were issued in 1991.
- The first permit priority (Phase 1) was cities with populations over 100,000. Later, smaller counties and cities would be covered by Phase II permits. The Phase II program is just starting.
- Albuquerque applied for its first permit in 1991 but it was put on hold by EPA’s Region 6. They were concentrating their efforts on larger cities in other states they cover (Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Arkansas).
- Albuquerque received its first, five-year permit in 2003. Our partners in this effort are AMAFCA, UNM and the New Mexico DOT. The EPA is drafting our second, five-year permit.
- The first permit was very general with few specifics. It mostly involved a program for monitoring our outfalls and collecting chemical tests.
- The EPA tells us that the next permit will contain much more specific requirements. The City must develop a program, staff and ordinance to comply. We must also develop a fee system to support these requirements.

Albuquerque area storm drainage system facts

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>City of Albuquerque</u>	<u>AMAFCA</u>
Area in square miles	188.6	
Miles of storm drain pipes & boxes	722	6
Number of storm drain inlets	16,100	
Miles of lined drainage channels	33	36
Miles of unlined, natural arroyos	18	31
Number of drainage ponds	104	18
Number of flood control dams	11	34

On average, the City gets 8.7 inches of rain per year resulting in about 5.9 billion gallons of runoff each year to the Rio Grande. It is estimated that rain which falls at Montgomery and Tramway will be in the Rio Grande within 45 minutes. **Stormwater does not receive any chemical or biological treatment.** Only some floatable and sediment removal occurs.

Challenges to our Stormwater Quality

- Enteric Bacteria (*identified as fecal coliform or E-coli*)
- Pollution from cars (oil, gasoline spills, tire wear, antifreeze & trace metals)
- Household chemicals (cleaners, degreasers, pesticides)
- Lawn chemicals (fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides)
- Industrial Chemicals (PCBs, heavy metals, copper)
- Volatile organics (poly-aromatic hydrocarbons from parking lots)
- Silt and sediment from poorly-maintained construction sites

What you can do to help

- Don't put **anything** down the storm drain inlets. **"ONLY RAIN DOWN THE DRAIN"** is our motto. Make it yours.
- **Pick up after your pet** when walking them on public property and don't let them off leash. Properly dispose of dog waste in trash containers. If you see others leaving pet waste on the ground, take an opportunity to educate them on good citizenship. *It is estimated that over 1,000 tons of uncollected dog waste ends up in the Rio Grande each year. That's an average of 3 tons per day!*
- Use lawn fertilizers and chemicals in accordance with the labels.
- Properly store and dispose of household chemicals. Use the city's **free** service operated by the Rinchem Company at 6133 Edith Blvd NE. Open Mon, Wed & Fri 8:30–4:30 & Sat 8–3. Household Hazardous Waste Hotline: 345-1650
- Properly maintain your vehicle to minimize or eliminate oil leaks. Properly dispose of used motor oil. Never pour it down a storm drain.
- Wash your car on your lawn or at a professional car wash that recycles their water.
- Don't hose down your driveway or sidewalk into the street. That material will end up in the Rio Grande. Besides, it's a waste of our precious water.
- Talk to your children and neighbors about stormwater quality.
- Call 311 to report any violation of "Only Rain Down the Drain."
- Visit www.keeptheriogrand.org for more information.
- Support a Stormwater Quality City Ordinance which makes dumping things into the system against the law and sets fines and penalties.

For further information, or to schedule an educational talk from a member of the Middle Rio Grande Stormwater Quality Team, contact Kathy Verhage @ 768-3654 or Roland Penttila @ 768-2778.