

How You Can Help Reduce Sewer Overflows and Protect the St. Joseph River

Everyone can help solve the problem of raw sewage overflows into the St. Joseph River. Although the long-term solutions will require major investments by South Bend, Mishawaka and Elkhart, every little bit counts when it comes to reducing overflows and protecting the river. You can help in these ways:

■ Disconnect your downspouts and sump pumps if they are connected to the sanitary sewer system. South Bend and Elkhart have downspout disconnection programs that can provide free assistance:

- South Bend: Call the Division of Engineering at (574) 235-9251 to schedule an appointment.
- Elkhart: Call Elkhart Envirocorps at (574) 293-2572

■ Don't send fats, oils and grease down the drain. They clog both your plumbing and the sewer system, causing overflows and sewer backups. Pour the grease into a can and throw it in the trash instead.

■ Clean up after your pets. Their waste adds to the problem of stormwater pollution.

■ Dispose of household chemicals and used oil properly and not down the drain or down a storm sewer. Don't dump paint and oil on the ground; they will end up in our waterways. Contact your local Solid Waste Management District to learn how to safely dispose of these household hazardous wastes:



Elkhart County

500 N. Nappanee St., Suite 10B

Elkhart, IN 46514

Phone: (574) 293-2269

Internet: <http://www.in-map.net/counties/ELKHART/GOVERNMENT/sd/swmd/>

St. Joseph County

Household Hazardous Waste Facility

1105 E. 5th St.

Mishawaka, IN 46544

Phone: (574) 235-9971

Internet: www.swmd.org

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- Invite city representatives to make a presentation to your civic association or neighborhood group.
- Follow these tips for reducing water use in your homes and businesses:
 - Install low-volume toilets.
 - Check outdoor faucets, pipes, and hoses for leaks.
 - When cleaning your fish tank, use the water you've drained to water your plants.
 - Put food coloring in your toilet tank. If it seeps into the toilet bowl without flushing, you have a leak. Fixing it can save you more than 600 gallons a month.
 - Don't use running water to thaw foods.
 - Soak pots and pans instead of letting water run while you scrape them clean.
 - Direct downspouts or gutters toward shrubs and trees.
 - Wash your car on the grass.
 - Use a hose nozzle and turn off the water while you wash your car and save more than 100 gallons.
 - Turn off water while you shave and save more than 100 gallons a week.
 - Plug the bathtub drain before turning the water on and then adjust the water temperature as the tub fills.

