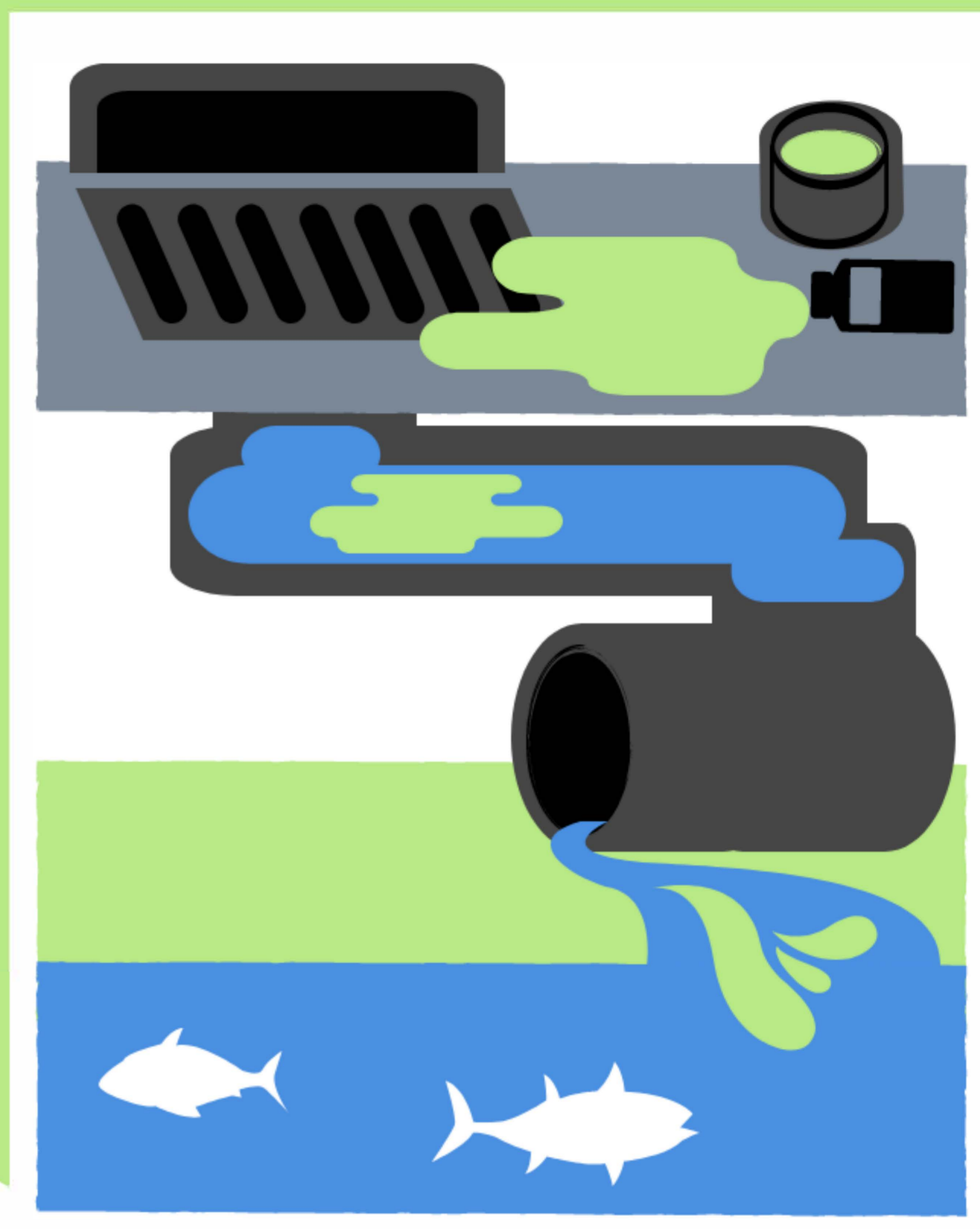


# What is an Illicit Discharge?

An illicit discharge is a **substance other than stormwater** that is released to a storm drain, swale, storm sewer, or other **system that moves, but does not treat, stormwater** before it is **directed into a stream, lake, or river.**



These substances are considered “illicit”, or **banned**, because **they are hazardous to the health and safety of our water resources.**

**Some example sources of illicit discharges include:**

- Sanitary wastewater (e.g. water from sinks, laundry, toilets, etc.)
- Effluent from septic tanks
- Spills from roadway accidents
- Improper disposal of auto and household hazardous wastes

## Identifying Illicit Discharges

Illicit Discharges might enter the stormwater system through **direct connection** or **indirect connection.**

**Direct connections** occur when wastewater pipes are mistakenly or deliberately connected to storm sewers.

**Indirect connections** occur when **cracked sanitary sewers leak** into storm sewers or when **spills flow** or **pollutants are dumped** into drains or waterways.

Illicit discharges are most noticeable during dry weather. A storm drain or a stormwater pipe with an **unusual odor, suds, an oil sheen, or flowing water during dry weather** might be an illicit discharge.

**Contact Houston Borough at (724) 745-1112 if you think you have identified an illicit discharge!**

## Properly Dispose of Hazardous Waste

Visit your county's website

to find information about local hazardous waste drop off programs

Learn more at [www.respectourwaters.org/illicit-discharge-swwt](http://www.respectourwaters.org/illicit-discharge-swwt)



RESPECT OUR WATERS