

Storm Drain Stenciling Guide

Storm drain stenciling involves placing a clean water message next to a storm drain to make the public “storm drain savvy” and less likely to use storm drains for disposing waste. Storm drain stenciling actually educates twice – first to the crew of volunteers who does the stenciling, and then to members of the public who happen upon the *Dump No Waste – Drains To River (or Lake, or Wetland)* message.



Various groups can stencil, including school and youth groups, neighborhood organizations, and social, business, and advocacy groups. Experience has shown that youth should be ten years old or older.



In addition to being stenciled, storm drains can be marked with plastic signs that are glued on the curb, or with messages that are imprinted in the metal casting.

Successful storm drain stenciling and marking programs pay attention to the following:



- **Safety:** Because of the location of curb storm drains, working in the street is a necessity. Busy streets are to be avoided, and orange safety vests and cones are to be used. Make sure volunteers wear gloves and eye protection.
- **Permission:** Make sure proper city departments are advised, and participants complete waiver of liability forms. Don't stencil areas that appear to be on private property without obtaining permission.
- **Planning:** Good team leader skills are needed! Plan out the area you are to stencil and assign teams and order supplies accordingly. One team can stencil from 10 to 15 storm drains per hour, and a can of spray paint can stencil ten storm drains.

(OVER)

- **Technique:** The medical adage “do no harm” applies here too! Make sure overspray does not damage parked cars and other property. Extra steps, such as good cleaning of the surface to be stenciled and using two light coats of paint instead of one heavy one, can extend the life of the stencil by years. Training and adult supervision is key!
- **Equipment:** Using a empty five-gallon bucket, assemble needed supplies, including safety vests and cones, gloves, eye protection, area map, wire brush, whisk broom, stencil(s), paint, door hangers, and garbage bag. Make sure latex road marking paint is used.
- **Education:** Extend the educational experience by having pre- and post- event sessions with volunteers and provide door hanger information in the neighborhoods stenciled.

In the Twin Cities metro, several organizations assist in organizing storm drain stenciling and marking events. Cities or watershed organizations may want to contract with them, or consider hiring on a seasonal employee to coordinate stenciling.

1. Friends of Mississippi River – 651-222-2193 (for Minneapolis and St. Paul)
2. Fortin Consulting - 763-478-3606

A comprehensive source of storm drain stenciling information is the Water Action Volunteers website sponsored by University of Wisconsin Extension, <http://clean-water.uwex.edu/wav/>. The information provided is written for Wisconsin communities, but is still very useful for planning events in Minnesota.

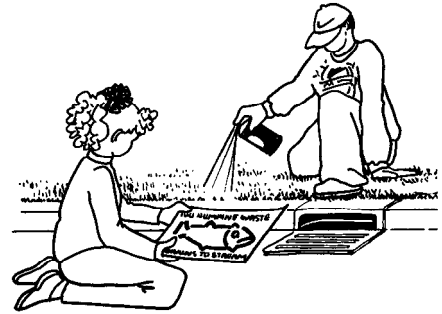
Other available resources are:

- Earthwater Stencils – suppliers of storm drain stencils
<http://www.earthwater-stencils.com/>
- DAS Manufacturing – suppliers of storm drain markers
<http://www.dasmanufacturing.com/>
- Waiver of Liability form (attached)
- *Storm Drain Song* to use as event warm-up (attached)

LIABILITY WAIVER

Storm Drain Stencil Event

Storm drain stenciling is an educational activity that alerts the public that curbside storm drains connect to near-by rivers, lakes, or wetlands. The activity involves stenciling the message *Dump No Waste – Drains to River (or Lake, or Wetland)* next to storm drains and hanging information cards on front doors in neighborhoods being stenciled.



I, the person signing below, being a volunteer involved in the storm drain stenciling project, or being the parent or legal guardian of a volunteer in the storm drain stenciling project, in considering participation in the storm drain stenciling project, do for myself and for any volunteers for who I am a parent or legal guardian, release, discharge, hold harmless and forever acquit the State of Minnesota, County of XXX, City of XXX, (names of other sponsors) and their officers, agents, representatives, and employees of any and all actions, causes of actions, claims or any other liabilities whatsoever, known or unknown, now existing or which arise in the future, on account of or in any way related to participation in the storm drain stenciling project.

Further, I assume all liability for any non-participants who accompany me.

Participant's name (please print): _____

Participant's signature: _____

Participant's age: _____

Signature of participant's parent
or legal guardian (for minors): _____

Date: _____

Storm Drain Song

(sung like a sea chantey)

1. Yo-ho, where does it go?
In pipes beneath the ground!

It goes to the water,
so you ought-er,
not dump anything down!

2. Yo-ho, where does it go?
Into our lakes and streams!

It can kill our fish,
make water “ish”,
if we don’t keep it clean!

