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DRAFT Stormwater Management Program Plan

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
Prepared Fall 2025

City of Olympia



What is Stormwater Management?

As our city grows, there are more hard surfaces such as roadways, parking lots and roofs. Rainwater can't soak into hard surfaces, so it becomes stormwater runoff. Stormwater management refers to the tools and programs that we have put in place to reduce runoff from flowing into our streets and waterways. By managing stormwater, we help keep our community safe and waters clean for people and wildlife.

Why is this important?

Stormwater pollution is one of the biggest threats to our streams, wetlands, lakes and Puget Sound! Sometimes treatment happens before stormwater enters our waters, but often not.

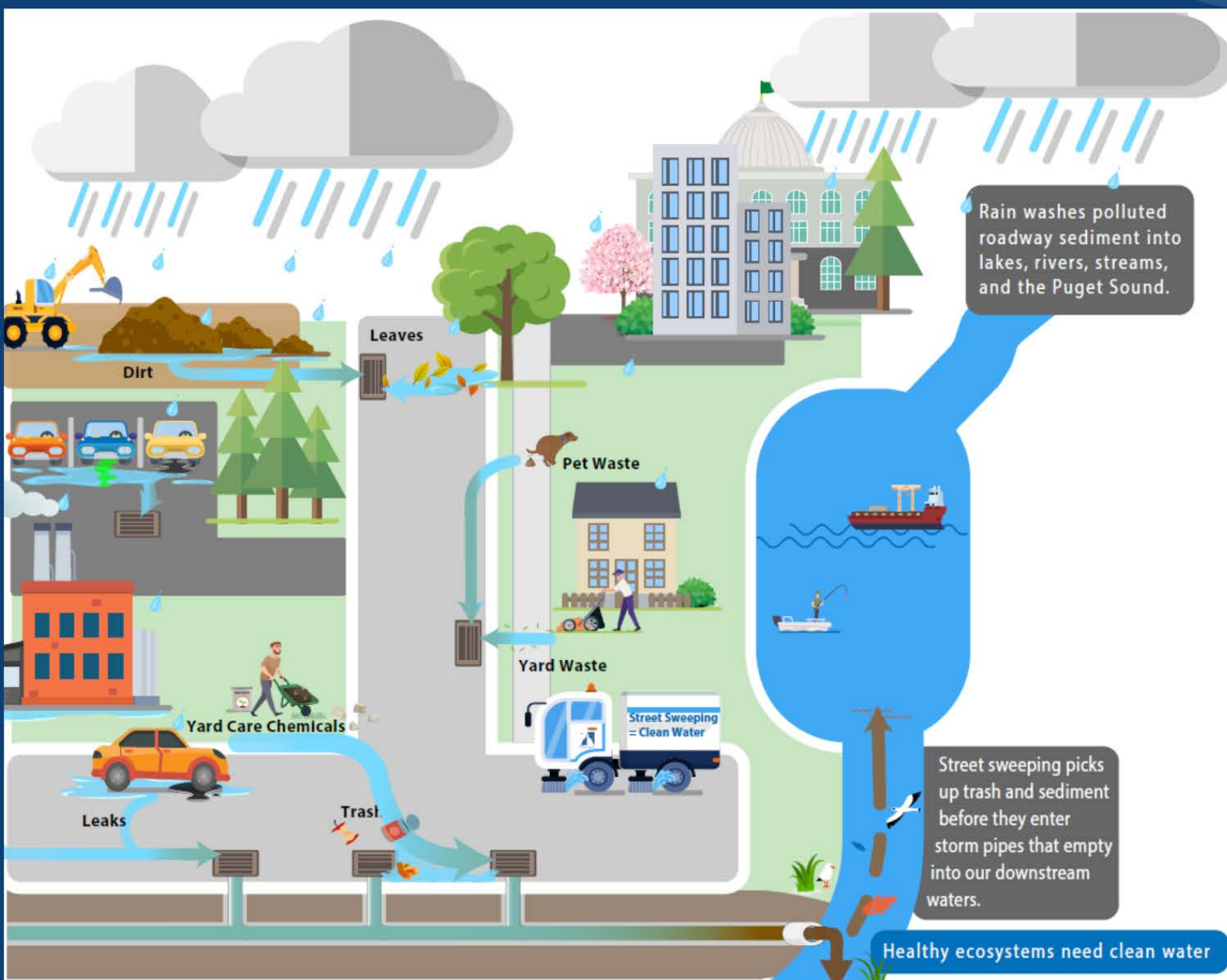
Water pollution harms creatures like salmon and orca, and impacts activities that we enjoy, like fishing, swimming and eating shellfish.

What are we doing about Stormwater?

We work on many levels to prevent flooding, reduce water pollution and restore salmon and wildlife habitats. This is a community-wide effort—done in partnership with residents, local businesses, and other agencies—together, we can build a more resilient and livable Olympia!

Every year we update our Stormwater Management Program Plan (SWMP Plan). It's our roadmap and it shows the Department of Ecology how we will meet the obligations of our Municipal Stormwater Permit. It's also a way for us to let the community know what we are doing.

What is Stormwater Pollution?



When it rains, water that runs off streets, driveways and yards can pick up dirt, leaves, pet waste, oil leaks, lawn chemicals and trash. This polluted runoff, also known as stormwater, flows into storm drains and then into our rivers, lakes and Puget Sound much of it without cleaning. Managing stormwater helps protect our waterways, wildlife, and drinking water - keeping our community healthy and safe.

What's in our Stormwater Management Program Plan?

The plan has ten parts that follow the requirements of our Permit, here's what's included:

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Program Planning

Because healthy streams and flood-safe neighborhoods are important, how well we plan and care for our stormwater systems matters!

Stormwater planning is more than managing excess rainwater; it's a broad approach that protects our community, enhances the environment, and contributes to a more sustainable future.



Stormwater Management Action Plan (SMAP)

A SMAP is a watershed approach to planning that outlines specific actions, projects and policies to reduce polluted stormwater runoff and improve water health in a prioritized area. It helps us reach water quality goals while meeting future population/development demands, and tells us where we should invest resources to make the greatest impact.

In 2023, the Indian Creek basin was chosen based on a watershed assessment. In 2026, Olympia will select an additional basin for strategic stormwater planning.

Low Impact Development (LID)

LID (aka green infrastructure) mimics natural systems that soak up and clean stormwater runoff. Examples include rain gardens, green roofs and permeable pavement. Benefits of green infrastructure include: cleaner water, reduced flooding, reduced heat island effects, habitat connectivity, increased green spaces.

Olympia implements LID regulations. Staff are exploring ways to promote green infrastructure development in Olympia. In 2026, we will continue to collaborate with regional partners to further this effort.

Olympia will adopt and implement tree canopy goals and policies that support stormwater management by December 31, 2028.



Utility staff actively participate in long-range planning efforts such as updates to the City's Comprehensive Plan, the Capital Mall Triangle Plan and the Olympia Sea Level Rise Collaborative.

In 2026, work will focus on implementing new Comprehensive Plan policies including taking a "one water" approach to stormwater management, pursuing green infrastructure projects and studying how public-private partnerships could be leveraged to implement stormwater projects.



Public Education and Outreach



Stream Team of Thurston County programs are the result of a 35 yearlong partnership, sponsored by the Stormwater Utilities of Lacey, Olympia, Thurston County and Tumwater. We provide information and resources that connect people to nature and engage the community in everyday actions that keep pollutants out of stormwater.

Ongoing outreach includes a quarterly newsletter, monthly emails, social media posts and a website to promote watershed stewardship events, hands-on science activities and actions for clean water.

Stormwater Week



In 2026, Olympia will expand Stormwater Week to reach more 6th grade students.

The Olympia Storm and Surface Water Utility has a robust public outreach and education program. The Utility employs two dedicated full-time staff focused on developing and implementing general awareness, stewardship and pollution prevention programs.

Staff continue to prioritize equity in our outreach programs by developing an equity plan and collaborating with overburdened communities.

Marine Creature Mondays



Stream Bug Monitoring



Habitat Stewardship



Salmon Stewards



ADOPT
A STORM
DRAIN



In 2026, Olympia will launch a new social marketing campaign called Adopt a Drain.



Public Involvement



In the fall of 2025, staff launched our “Join the Stormwater Conversation” Engage Olympia site. The Engage page includes a survey for the community to provide their input on the 2026 Draft SWMP Plan and 2024-2029 SMAP. Check it out [here](#)! City staff met with tribal representatives to seek input.

In 2025-2026 staff will provide opportunities for input at community events such as Arbor Day, Latinx Conservation Week, Indigenous Peoples Day, Salmon Celebration and Arts Walk.

May 31st!

Olympia posts our annual SWMP Plan to our website. Click [here](#) to find it!



Olympia is committed to providing ongoing opportunities for the public, including overburdened communities, to provide input into the development of this annual plan and into other initiatives designed to reduce stormwater impacts and improve water quality. One of our goals is to make sure the benefits and any burdens of our work reach people equitably, and that voices historically left out of this process are heard and represented.

In November 2025 & 2026, staff will present the Draft SWMP Plan to the City of Olympia Utility Advisory Committee and ask for input.

In 2025 & 2026 staff will present the SWMP Plan to community groups across Olympia such as the rotary club, League of Women Voters, Olympia Youth Council, Latinx community, West Olympia Rotary Club and Watershed Resource Inventory Area 13 (WRIA 13) Salmon Habitat Recovery Lead Entity .

A photograph of a pond with several swans swimming in the water, surrounded by trees and foliage.

**JOIN THE
STORMWATER
CONVERSATION**

Mapping our Stormwater System



Check out our
online
interactive
maps [here!](#)



In 2025, we updated the Olympia Equity Index. The Index shows areas of low and high burden within Olympia. The index uses 5 metrics: economic stability, environment, walkability, education and livability. We will use the Equity Index as a base to overlay the locations of our treatment and flow control facilities, tree canopies and outfalls. We anticipate completing this work in 2026.

Mapping helps us understand

- Where stormwater is being collected and where it is going
- Areas that would benefit from increased stormwater management
- How and where tree canopy enhancement can help reduce stormwater issues
- Location of City owned and privately owned stormwater system features
- High priority areas for street sweeping to reduce flooding and remove pollution
- Where stormwater treatment and flow control facilities, outfalls, discharge points, and tree canopy are in relation to overburdened communities

Our mapping system shows how stormwater moves through our city using a Geographic Information System (GIS). It stores data and allows us to do analysis that helps us manage our stormwater programs effectively and efficiently. It informs decision-making, helps us comply with regulations, and enhances community engagement. We maintain and update our existing stormwater mapping through site inspections, televising and work done in the field. We maintain both internal and external facing GIS-based maps of the stormwater system.



Preventing Dumping, Leaks and Spills



Our priority is preventing spills in the first place and quickly cleaning them up when they happen. We work hard to keep spills, leaks and illegal dumping out of our stormwater system. This work is vital to protecting community welfare, human health and our water. Olympia's Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) program is designed to prohibit, prevent, detect, characterize, trace, and eliminate illicit connections and illicit discharges into our municipal stormwater system.

We respond to and investigate all calls and reports regarding concerns such as illegal dumping, spills, illicit discharges and illicit connections



We train all field staff on how to prevent, identify, trace and respond to issues and concerns. Starting in 2025, we launched an updated training program that covers all Permit requirements and standard procedures for IDDE

We keep records of all calls and the resulting actions taken

Staff provide community outreach about spills prevention, reporting and clean-up

In 2026 we will work with the Olympia Fire department to update & implement procedures to minimize discharges to the MS4 during post-emergency clean-up and disposal activities in 2026

We publicize and operate a 24-hour, 7-days a week spills hotline via our Public Works Dispatch

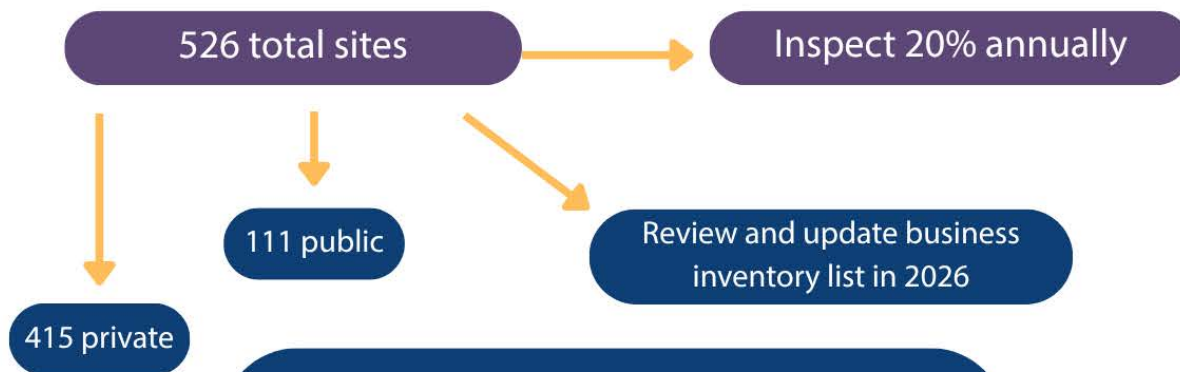
No one may discharge or cause to be discharged any materials of any kind into the MS4, except stormwater, clean groundwater, and clean city potable water with chlorine concentrations less than 0.1 ppm
OMC 13.16.030

Report Spills 24/7
360-753-8333

Helping Businesses Prevent Pollution



Through our business inspection program, we help businesses identify and address operational and structural sources of stormwater pollution. We offer technical support on pollution prevention best practices, and how to comply with City codes. Our hope is this will save businesses costly cleanup of spills, as well as protect their investments, employees, customers and our community.



Olympia staff distributed spill kits and spill plans to sites that were in need in 2025.

Staff designed a handout for businesses that includes general stormwater information and business pollution prevention best practices.

We are continually training staff on pollution prevention best practices and their proper application, inspection protocols, lessons learned, typical cases, and enforcement procedures.

Click [here](#) for additional resources on our Business Pollution Prevention webpage!



Any person, business, or entity storing or using materials containing contaminants in any manner that may result in a prohibited discharge shall implement the source control best practices described in the Drainage Design and Erosion Control Manual.

OMC 13.16.045

In 2026, we will reach out to owners of buildings constructed between 1950-1979 about best practices to eliminate PCBs from entering our stormwater system from their property.



Inspecting Privately Owned Stormwater Systems

Through our private maintenance inspection program, we provide resources for property owners to meet inspection and maintenance requirements. We operate a stormwater facility inspection program for multi-family residential, commercial, and HOAs. The City manages maintenance agreements to ensure privately owned stormwater systems are maintained and operating as intended.

190 total sites and growing



Inspect 100% annually

Check out [our website](#) for more information, public maps, and a free online stormwater facility inspection and maintenance training!

The city manages maintenance agreements that clearly identify the party responsible for maintenance and establish enforcement procedures, these are filed with the Thruston County Auditor.

Annual inspections are required of all stormwater treatment and flow control BMPs/facilities that discharge to the City's stormwater system and are permitted by Olympia as required by the 2007-2024 Municipal Stormwater Permit.

The City keeps records of inspections, technical assistance, and enforcement actions by staff.

In 2025, staff implemented a user-friendly inspection form for property owners, property management and contractors.



Property owners shall inspect all stormwater facilities located on their parcels and maintain the facilities in accordance with the Manual, so they function as designed.

OMC 13.16.170

Managing Runoff in Developed Areas

Strategic investments focus on reducing stormwater impacts and improving stormwater management in previously developed areas of the City. This helps prevent water quality degradation and improve conditions in parts of the city that were built with little or no stormwater infrastructure.

Stormwater investments are focused on retrofits identified through our Stormwater Management Action Plan (SMAP) or as otherwise planned by our jurisdiction. Each year, the City pursues one water quality grant from the Department of Ecology. In 2026, Olympia will prioritize one water quality project to receive grant funding.

Brawne Avenue Stormwater Retrofit Project

Designed to remove 50% to 80% of the suspended solids (trash, pet waste, tire dust, microplastics, etc.) from stormwater coming from a 59-acre basin in West Olympia. The project was funded by a grant from the Department of Ecology and from stormwater rates. Construction for this project was finished in October 2025.



Green Stormwater Retrofit at Rogers and Hays

On Ecology's Final Funding Offer list, eligible for \$759,220. This project will treat stormwater from 16 acres. Project designs are 90% complete, construction is anticipated Summer of 2026 or 2027 pending grant funding.



By investing in stormwater infrastructure, we are taking steps to protect our water quality today and preserve it for future generations.

Controlling Runoff from Construction Activities

Reducing the impacts from development activities is crucial for preventing stormwater pollution, minimizing erosion and flooding and protecting aquatic habitat. From development plan review to construction site inspections our program ensures compliance with City codes, drainage design and erosion control standards and Permit requirements for both private and public projects.

Check out
our DDECM
[here!](#)

Drainage Design and Erosion Control Manual (DDECM)

We set standards and provide guidance to control the quantity and quality of stormwater produced by new development and redevelopment projects using Olympia's DDECM.

In 2026, staff will begin updating our DDECM to meet requirements of the 2024 Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington.

We implement an enforcement action against those failing to comply with requirements of the DDECM; including sites that are also covered by stormwater permits issued by Ecology.

We review all stormwater site plans for proposed development activities and we inspect all sites prior to clearing and construction, and during construction.

Staff regularly inspect all stormwater flow control and treatment facilities and catch basins on sites during construction and upon completion.

Staff are trained to remain current with new and revised stormwater best practices and standards related to erosion control, low impact development and stormwater design models.



We provide links to the following:

- [Construction Stormwater General Permit Notice of Intent](#)
- [Industrial Stormwater General Permit Notice of Intent](#)
- [Registration requirements for Underground Injection Control Wells](#)



Inspecting, Operating, and Maintaining Public Infrastructure

Olympia's publicly owned stormwater system is vast. It includes storm drains, pipes, ditches, vaults, ponds and more. As our stormwater infrastructure ages, it's crucial to continually inspect and maintain our system. This ensures that it functions properly and helps us plan and budget for infrastructure replacement and upgrades.

Olympia operates an enhanced street sweeping program with two regenerative air sweepers which remove dirt, trash, leaves and tire particles from roads before washing into storm drains.

We regularly inspect for damage to stormwater treatment and flow control facilities during and after all major storm events. A list of flooding "hot spots" informs our crew where extra attention is needed during heavy rain events. Repair needs are also identified through service requests, structure inspections, pipeline CCTV inspections, or engineering or special group directives.

Regular inspections and cleaning is conducted for all public stormwater infrastructure (storm drains, treatment facilities, filters, storm ponds, etc.)

We are expanding our ditch inspection and maintenance program in 2026.

Staff implement an abbreviated Erosion Control Plan for ground disturbing work affecting more than 100 square feet of earth or when saw cutting or ditching activities occur.

The City conducts monthly facilities inspections to ensure operations are aligned with stormwater pollution prevention plans (SWPPPs) developed for Olympia's Maintenance Center and Squaxin Park Maintenance Facility.



Operations and maintenance field staff have received training addressing the importance of protecting water quality, operations and maintenance standards, inspection procedures, relevant SWPPPs, selecting appropriate BMPs, ways to prevent or minimize impacts on water quality, and procedures for reporting water quality concerns.



Addressing Watershed Clean-up Plans



Also called Total Maximum Daily Loads, water clean-up plans are created by the Department of Ecology for specific watersheds. TMDLs are used to address polluted waters by identifying the sources of pollution and determining how much each source needs to be reduced to meet water quality standards. The plans specify what the problem is and actions we must take to address the issue. Under the Permit, Olympia has TMDL requirements for three watersheds. This includes Henderson Inlet, Deschutes River and Budd Inlet.

New
addition!

Budd Inlet Watershed

Dissolved Oxygen

Conduct an enhanced street sweeping program, prioritizing roadways with high-use, curbed streets, canopy cover, and road sections with no stormwater treatment that drain to Budd Inlet.

Analyze nutrient output from our stormwater system to Budd Inlet and identify high priority areas.

Consider TMDL in our watershed prioritization process (SMAP) and in our stormwater investment prioritization.

Henderson Inlet Watershed

Fecal Coliform

Through site plan review and permitting, development within the Woodard Creek basin requires phosphorus controls for stormwater treatment.

The Cities of Lacey and Olympia updated their coordinating sampling plan to reflect new permit requirements in 2024. The City of Olympia will continue to sample Taylor Wetlands outfall at least once during the 2025-2026 wet season.

Deschutes River Watershed

Stream Buffers

Per City code, limit the amount of impervious (hard) surfaces and promote the use of low-impact development (LID) approaches.

Apply the City's Shoreline Master Program and Critical Area Ordinance which requires stream buffers for new development.

Promote tree planting and restoration activities through our Habitat Stewardship Program, prioritizing natural areas buffering wetlands and streams.



Monitoring and Documenting Progress



An integral part of stormwater management is understanding how we can improve our programs and methods to protect downstream waters and our community. The Permit allows jurisdictions to do monitoring and assessment within their jurisdiction or contribute to a regional fund called Stormwater Action Monitoring (SAM). SAM projects are designed to produce regionally relevant findings. They include effectiveness studies, status and trends studies, and source identification studies. Studies are proposed and selected by the contributing members.

Regional Participation

Olympia has opted to participate in SAM to meet requirements of this section. City staff are active in the decision-making process and participate in SAM sub-committees. Additionally, staff have sponsored, been technical advisors and proposed SAM regional studies. For information, visit the [SAM website!](#)

Olympia Monitoring Programs

Through our outreach programs, Olympia conducts water quality sampling and aquatic macroinvertebrate (stream bug) sampling in several creeks to evaluate stream health. While not required under the permit, these activities complement and inform other stormwater management activities.

Effectiveness and Source Identification Studies

Olympia contributes \$20,857.00 annually to this program.

Regional Status and Trends Monitoring

Olympia contributes \$14,093.00 annually to this program



Olympia will continue to maintain all records related to Permit activities and the SWMP Plan. We summarize these activities in the Annual Compliance Report to Ecology.



Underground Injection Controls



Underground Injection Controls (UICs) are manmade structures designed to release fluids deep into the soil. They come in many types such as drywells, drain fields, infiltration trenches or bioretention systems that have a perforated pipe.

It's important to protect ground water, so the Underground Injection Control Program regulates these structures. The UIC Program is run by the Washington State Department of Ecology in accordance with Chapter 173 -218 Washington Administrative Code (WAC).

All UICs must be registered using Ecology's online registration process before use. Registrations for UICs that manage stormwater must be submitted 60 days prior to construction. There is no fee to register UICs, see the following website for details: <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/guidancetechnical-assistance/underground-injection-control-program/registeruic-wells-online>.



For more information, visit: [Volume I Chapter 4 page 157 for I-4 UIC Program Guidelines in the 2024 Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington \(SWMMWW\)](#).

Note that existing UICs that are unable to obtain Ecology authorization without modification may require design review and permit approval per City of Olympia requirements.



2026 DRAFT Stormwater Management Program Plan

The Draft 2026 SWMP Plan describes the actions and activities that Olympia plans to implement over the coming year to manage stormwater and protect the land and watersheds it affects. Central to that effort is internal coordination among all Olympia departments and divisions, subject to Permit requirements. This coordination mechanism successfully engages staff across the City, minimizing barriers to achieving Permit compliance.

The SWMP Plan is a living document that will be updated continually as circumstances change. It will be updated annually throughout the Permit term to reflect changes in the City's approach to stormwater management and Permit compliance.

Olympia will continue to invite the community to participate in decision-making processes regarding the City's SWMP Plan and SMAP. For more information on participation opportunities, see the Public Involvement and Participation section of this plan.



Olympia is committed to implementing the programs described herein and recognizes that doing so contributes to three very important objectives:

- Protection of Olympia's waters and lands so all community members can enjoy them safely today and for generations to come.
- Compliance with the City's Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit.
- Commitment to salmon recovery and tribal treaty rights to fish and protect habitat.



**For questions about City of Olympia's SWMP Plan
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