ADOPT A HIGHWAY

Volunteers Cleaning Virginia
1-800-PRIDE-VA

Bag It, Move It, Leave It or Report it?

Adopt-a-Highway instructions for handling roadside litter & Identifying Illicit Discharge

If you've ever wondered what to do with something you've found on the roadside, consult the list below to find out whether it is an item you should bag, an item you should move and stack alongside your stacked bags an item you should leave where you found it or an item you should report immediately. Make a note of any item you are leaving and mark it with a trash bag if you think a VDOT crew would have trouble finding it.

Bag It

- Small items made of paper, cardboard, plastic
- Styrofoam, wood, rubber, glass, or metal provided that the item does not have sharp edges.
- Small, empty containers provided they don't have sharp edges.

Move It

- Items with dull, pointed edges that might tear a bag.
- Large items that would prevent a bag from being properly tied closed.
- Heavy items that could tear a bag, provided that the item can be moved without causing physical injury.
- Containers that are not empty if the contents won't spill when moved and you can identify the product as one that is not hazardous. If you suspect that an item contains urine, do not move it.

If in doubt, leave it alone!

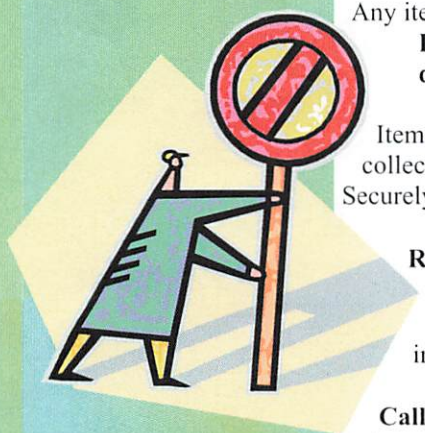
Leave It

These items should be left where found without taking further action:

Sharp, large, or heavy items that could cause physical injury if moved.

Any item in an **unsafe location** (within six feet of a traffic lane, on unstable ground, etc.).

Report these items to your local VDOT office that day, or on the next working day, during normal business hours.



Items you are not permitted to bag or move that will **not be easily visible** to the VDOT crew collecting your filled bags. If possible place a filled bag near to the item to mark its location. Securely close items containing hazardous substances.*

Report these items to your local VDOT office that same day. If you are unable to speak directly with a VDOT employee, call 911 to report the item:

Any item that you **cannot identify** and **suspect may be hazardous**. Unclosed or leaking items containing **hazardous substances.***

Call 911 if you find the following kinds of items. If you do not have access to a cell phone then someone other than your group leader must leave the site to make a call. Then, unless advised to leave the area, the leader must stay at the site until a law enforcement officer or VDOT representative arrives.

- Items with a **hazardous material label.***
- Items that could pose an **immediate danger.***
- Items that could be **crime-scene evidence.***
- Items emitting a **strong odor.***

*** Keep a safe distance away from the item and do not disturb it in any way!**

Items of Concern

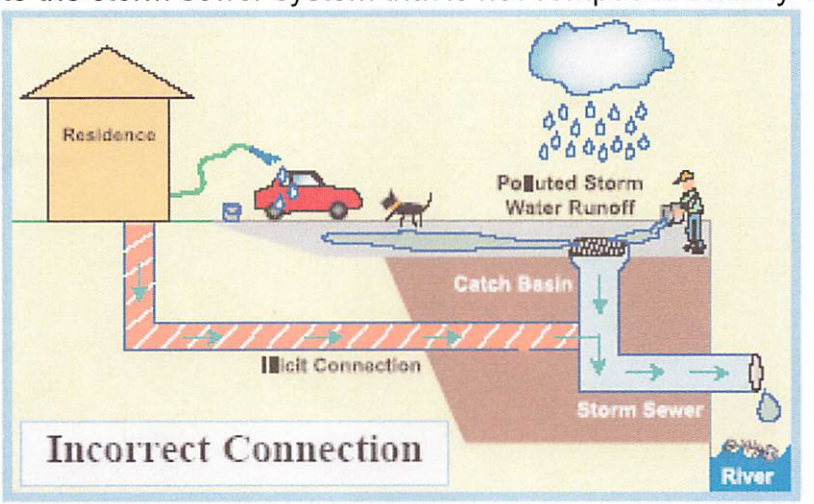
Item	Leave It	Leave It and Call VDOT During Business Hours	Leave It and Call VDOT That Day	Leave It and Call 911 Immediately
Miscellaneous Items				
Broken glass	✔			
Any item you cannot identify and suspect of being hazardous			✔	
Hazardous Substances				
Spills of liquid and powdery substances			✔	
Fuels		✔ (If securely contained)	✔ (If opened and leaking)	
Motor oils, transmission fluid, petroleum products		✔ (If securely contained)	✔ (If opened and leaking)	
Antifreeze		✔ (If securely contained)	✔ (If opened and leaking)	
Batteries		✔ (If securely contained)	✔ (If opened and leaking)	
Flares		✔		
Paint		✔ (If securely contained)	✔ (If opened and leaking)	
Aerosol can (not empty)		✔		
Human urine, feces, blood waste (gauze, etc.)		✔ (If securely contained)	✔ (If opened and leaking)	
Syringes, labeled medicines (aspirin, prescription drugs, etc.)		✔		
Animal carcasses		✔		
Extremely Hazardous Items / Possible Crime Scene Evidence				
Bloody items that may be crime scene evidence				✔
Explosives, possible bombs (capped pipes, wrapped packages, etc.)				✔
Weapons (guns, knives, etc.) unspent ammunition				✔
Items with hazardous material labels				✔
Unlabeled medicines or medicine bottles, marijuana, drug paraphernalia				✔
Animals that may have been poached				✔
Propane gas tanks				✔
Full cat litter bags				✔
Containers of acid			✔	
Items put together with duct tape			✔	
Containers with tubing attached				✔
Closed tool boxes or coolers				✔

How to identify Illicit Discharges

The main purpose of detecting illicit discharge is to improve the quality of water flowing into our rivers, lakes, and streams.

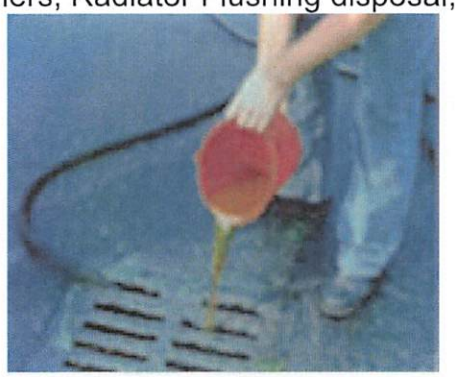
What is Illicit Discharge?

Any discharge to the storm sewer system that is not composed entirely of storm water.



Examples of Illicit Discharge:

Sanitary Wastewater, Gas & Motor Oil, Household Cleaners, Paints, Pesticides, Solvents, Vehicle Spills, Weed Killers, Radiator Flushing disposal, Laundry Wastewaters.



Does the discharge have a distinct odor?

Some smells coming from an outfall pipe are an immediate indicator of an illicit discharge, for example, sewage, gasoline, or chemical smell should be reported.

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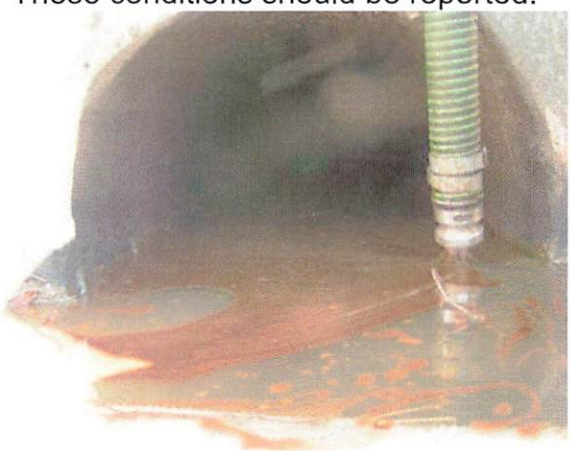
How to identify Illicit Discharges

Is the water cloudy or full of sediment?

Gray water that should be treated at a sewage treatment plant may cause a cloudy appearance in the discharged water. A construction site without proper storm water best management practices could be discharging sediment to a storm drain. These conditions should be reported.

Is there anything floating in the discharge?

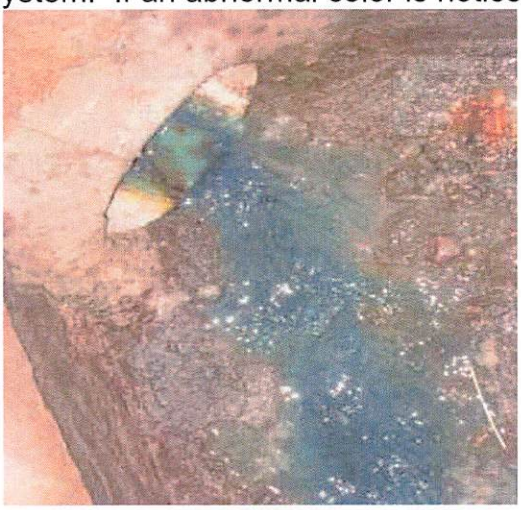
Soapsuds and oil sheens are examples of floatables that may be found in an illicit discharge. These conditions should be reported.

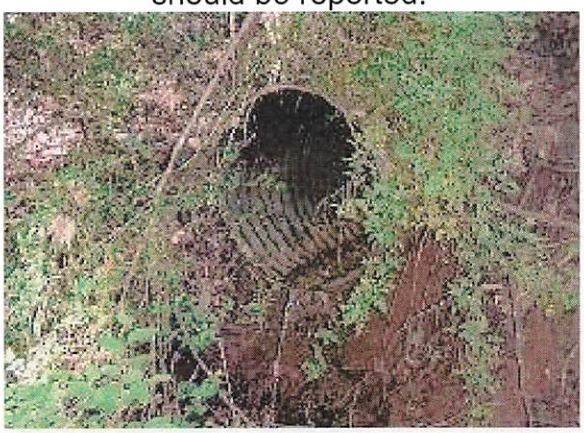


How to identify Illicit Discharges

What color is the discharge?

An abnormally colored discharge is a good indication that there is an illicit connection to the storm water conveyance system. If an abnormal color is noticed, it should be reported.



Is there excessive vegetation around the outfall pipe?

Excessive vegetation around the outfall pipe as opposed to the surrounding area is an indication of increased nutrients in the storm water and could be from fertilizers and should be reported.