

# Why do we need a stormwater plan?

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In 1987, amendments to the Clean Water Act obligated the EPA and ADEM to require urban areas to regulate stormwater.

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) refers to all stormwater conveyance structures managed by a municipality, county or other designated non-governmental facilities.



The MS4 permitting program was introduced in a phased approach starting in 1990. Larger

municipalities having the greatest potential for stormwater impacts were permitted first. In 1999, smaller municipalities were also brought under the MS4 permitting process.

The requirement states that your Stormwater Management Plan shall include the minimum steps outlined here.

This obligation is not simply an 'unfunded mandate.' It is vital to the health of your community to safeguard water quality and quality of life.

## Respect The Connect™

The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program recently solicited extensive input to discover what was considered most important to our coastal lifestyle. Over one thousand citizens from Mobile & Baldwin counties, as well as area Scientists and Resource Managers, identified what they valued most about living on the Alabama Gulf Coast. The issue of stormwater runoff plays a major role in each value identified.

-  **Access** to water and open spaces
-  **Coastline** Protection
-  **Heritage** and Cultural Protection
-  **Resiliency** of our environment
-  **Water** quality
-  **Fish** habitats and abundance & livelihoods linked to fishing

As elected officials it is vital to 'Respect the Connect' between an effective Stormwater Management Plan and fulfilling your obligation to protect the things your constituents value most.

Please view the companion video to this brochure at [www.mobilebaynep.com](http://www.mobilebaynep.com), in the Latest Videos section.



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# Understanding Your Stormwater Management Plan



# Your Stormwater Management Plan shall include the following minimum steps.

## 1 Public Education Program Highlighting Stormwater

Your program can include brochures, public workshops and a website with easily understood information for your constituents to follow.

## 2 A Public Participation Program to ensure community input on all stormwater matters

Interacting with your constituents on stormwater-related groups, such as Clean Water Partnership, watershed organizations, and Mobile Bay NEP committees helps connect citizens to the effort.

## 3 Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination

Your plan must include mapping & inspecting stormwater conveyance structures such as pipes, ditches, and detention ponds. Ordinances prohibiting illicit discharges of oil, grease, paints, wash waters, and other pollutants are needed.

## 4 Construction Site Runoff Control

Your municipality shall establish and manage a program to monitor construction sites for stormwater impacts from land disturbances. Your program must include erosion & sediment control inspections that are documented and enforceable at the local level.

## 5 Post Construction Runoff Control

Your plan will encourage development of post-construction stormwater management to minimize pollutants in new and re-developed areas; private and public stormwater facilities must be inspected and maintained; and ordinances that require facility maintenance must be put in place.

## 6 Pollution Prevention & Good Housekeeping

Control & reduction of stormwater pollutants from public facilities. This includes street sweeping, litter control, employee training, and management of all environmental permits such as scrap tire facilities and underground storage tanks (UST's).

## 7 Additional Requirements for larger MS4s

May cover industrial stormwater runoff, spill prevention and response; hazardous waste; and the application of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers.

## 8 Stormwater Program Monitoring

Stormwater Program Monitoring is required to provide data to assess how effective your program is at reducing pollutants. For larger and some smaller MS4s, this includes water quality sampling during rain events for pollutants determined by the permit.

## 9 Reporting

Your program must document all steps and report to ADEM annually to verify that the program reduces stormwater pollutants and minimizes impact to our waters.

## A Note on Compliance

It is important to realize full compliance is not optional. Many states are levying fines that reach into the millions of dollars.

## For Additional Information

Please view the companion video to this brochure at [www.mobilebaynep.com](http://www.mobilebaynep.com). Please visit the Alabama Department of Environmental Management's (ADEM) Stormwater Management Branch at [www.adem.state.al.us](http://www.adem.state.al.us).