

Frequently Asked Questions

What is MS4?

MS4 is an acronym for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System. A separate storm sewer system is any conveyance that transports storm runoff directly to a receiving stream. In addition to the inlets, and pipes we associate with storm sewers, it also includes curbing, swales, ditches, channels, etc. Runoff that enters a separate storm system is not treated for water quality before it enters the waterways.

What is storm water runoff?

Storm Water Runoff is defined as rainfall or snow melt flowing across the ground. It flows directly to waterways through ditches, swales, storm sewers, etc., and is not treated. Storm water runoff carries with it, sediment, automotive fluids, fertilizer, trash, and various other pollutants.

What is a watershed?

A watershed is any land area, large or small, that collects and drains storm water to one location. The City of New Castle contributes to two different watersheds. The Driftwood Watershed is spread out over portions of eight counties and collects the majority of storm water from the city draining to the Big Blue River. The Flatrock-Haw Watershed is spread out over portions of six counties and collects storm water from the extreme eastern and southeastern part of the city draining to the Flatrock River.

What is the difference between point source & non-point source pollution?

Point source pollution is the polluted water discharged from a pipe such as municipal discharge of combined sewer overflows, or industrial waste discharges. It is the type of pollution that most often comes to mind when we think of water pollution. The City of New Castle has begun implementing our Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) to eliminate or greatly reduce sewage overflows to the Big Blue River during wet weather, in addition to a Pre-Treatment program to monitor and regulate industrial waste before it reaches the sewer system.

Non-point source pollution is that pollution that is picked up by rainfall or snowmelt that flows across residential yards, roadways, parking lots, farm fields, construction sites, etc. and is carried to receiving streams. With the strong regulations in place to control point source pollution, non-point source pollution has become the most significant source of pollution to our waterways today. The City of New Castle's Storm Water Management Program was developed to address this pollution.

What is a storm water management program?

When the City of New Castle, based upon our population, was designated an MS4 community, State and Federal regulations became applicable. In response, the city has developed a storm water management program. The goal is to reduce the quantity of pollutants picked up in storm water runoff from reaching the receiving streams. The general public is integral to this program and are encouraged to take an active role in protecting our natural water resources through their actions, and in reporting violations.