

Dear Illinois Watershed Town Resident:

Volunteers from 4-H and other organizations are attaching messages to storm drain inlets and curbs in your neighborhood:



It's a reminder to protect neighborhood springs and creeks that drain to the Illinois River and Lake Tenkiller. The Illinois River and Lake Tenkiller provide the habitat for the fish and wildlife we appreciate, as well as drinking water for other communities downstream.

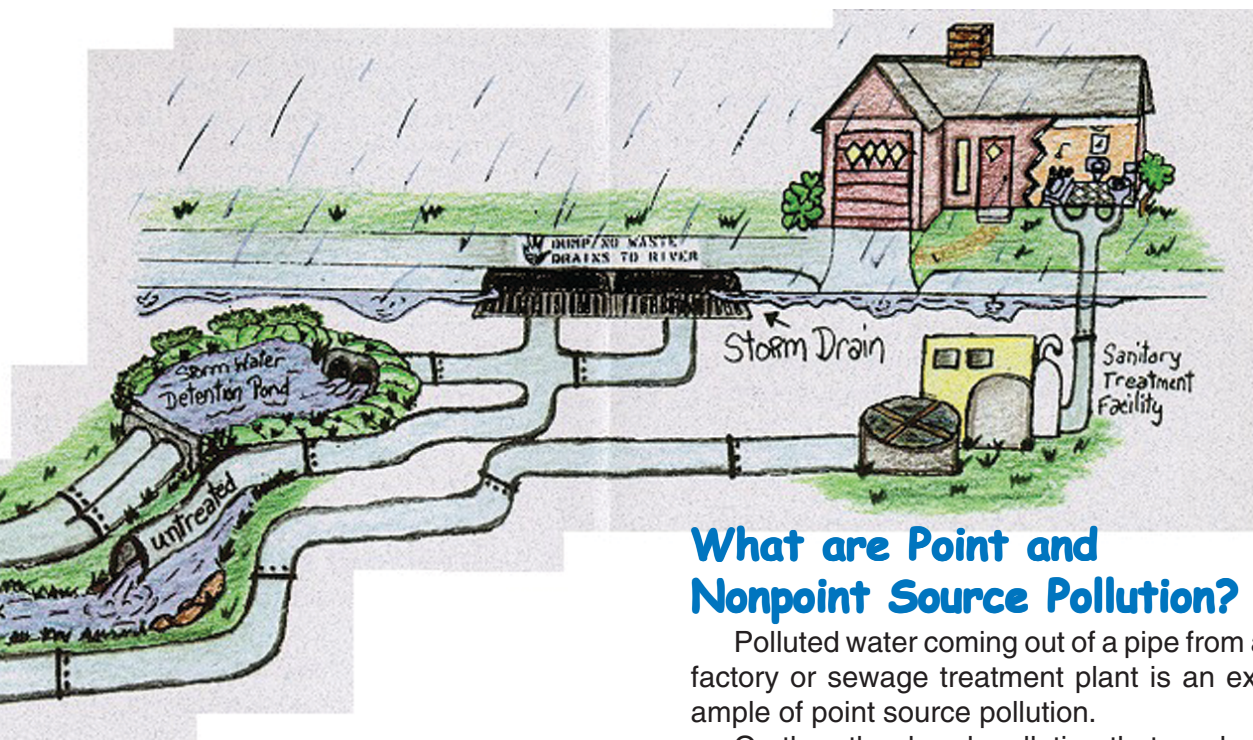


Sanitary Sewer System

Water from your sink, bathtub, and toilet travels through underground pipes to a Waste-water Treatment Plant. There, water is treated to remove pollutants, then it is released to eventually flow into the Illinois River.

What Ends up in the Illinois River?

Most homes in our larger towns are served by two kinds of sewer systems: storm sewers (or storm drainage systems) and **sanitary sewers**. Water moves through both systems to end up at the Illinois River, but there is a major difference between them. Read below to find out what it is!



Storm Drainage System

When rain falls or snow melts on our towns and suburbs, the water washes over roofs, streets, driveways, and yards. It picks up any pollutants that might be left on those surfaces. This **runoff** water is collected by storm drain inlets, ditches, and underground pipes that are designed to prevent street flooding. The runoff passes into neighborhood creeks that flow to the Illinois River and Lake Tenkiller **without any treatment!** All of these water collection devices are part of the **storm sewer or drainage system**.

What are Point and Nonpoint Source Pollution?

Polluted water coming out of a pipe from a factory or sewage treatment plant is an example of point source pollution.

On the other hand, pollution that washes off the land during rainstorms is called nonpoint source pollution, because it comes from many places and can not be traced back to one point. If pesticides or fertilizers are over-used or incorrectly applied, rainfall or snow-melt will wash them into the storm drainage system, which sends them to a neighborhood creek, then to the Illinois River.

Examples of Nonpoint Source Pollutants:

fertilizer	pesticide	motor oil
gasoline	antifreeze	paint
sediment (soil)	paint thinner	pet waste
soap	litter (trash)	grass clippings