

# How Does Trash Get Into Creeks?

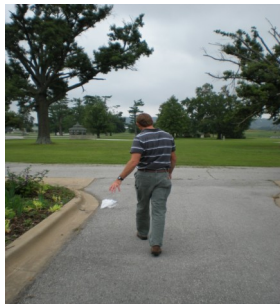


Trash can get into creeks by many ways. Sometimes people just leave their trash lying on the ground and they don't dispose of it properly in the trash can or dumpster - where trash should always go unless it is recyclable or compostable. The dirty diaper seen in the picture to the left was in a large parking lot in the middle of Fayetteville. If this dirty diaper would not have been picked up and disposed of properly it would have been washed down the storm drain conveyance. The conveyance would have then carried the dirty diaper straight into Mud Creek if it didn't get caught in the willow tree growing beside the conveyance that is displayed in the picture below.



## What Are The Top Five Ways That Trash Can Get Into Creeks ?

**1** People who throw their trash down on the ground instead of in the trash can or Dumpster.



**2** People who dump trash illegally.



**3** People who leave their trash sitting out instead of placing it in the trash can or dumpster. An example is not cleaning trash from a truck bed or trailer and driving which allows trash to blow away.



**4** People that burn or store items, materials, or trash right next to a stream.



**5** People don't take time to pick up and properly dispose of trash that others have left behind as litter.



*Please remember, it's everyone's responsibility to protect water quality.*

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# What is a Conveyance ?

A conveyance is a curb and gutter, inlet, ditch, culvert, storm drain or combination thereof that lead to a body of water, water collection device, or a wastewater treatment facility. The purpose of a stormwater conveyance is to transport water easily from one place (a parking lot) to another (a stream). In many cases conveyances do not lead to water treatment facilities but instead lead straight to a stream, wetland, or lake without being filtered or treated. When conveyances lead straight to a body of water without being treated they can deliver trash, oil, bacteria, and other pollutants directly to that body of water can degrade or lessen the quality of water for use by wildlife and humans.



Trash on the curb and gutter will be carried to an inlet, drainage ditch and stream.



Trash at the drainage ditch inlet that the curb and gutter lead to.



Trash in the concrete drainage ditch after going through the inlet.



Trash in the creek that has come from the urban landscape through conveyances.

## What is a Storm Drain ?

A storm drain is a conveyance that collects stormwater runoff from roads and parking lots and transports it to a discharge point. The discharge point is usually another conveyance, or a stream, wetland, or lake. Storm drains are often referred to as storm sewers. Most storm drains and storm sewers transport water and any pollutants that may be contained within the water directly to waterways from which we get drinking water from or use for recreational purposes. Storm drain systems can deliver water to natural streams and creeks faster than the conditions in which these streams have naturally developed. When water enters creeks faster than what creeks can naturally process, problems of flooding, property damage, and streambank erosion can begin.



Dirty diaper in front of a storm drain inlet that leads to a creek.



Trash at the outlet of a storm drain that leads to a creek.

## What is Stormwater ?

Stormwater runoff is a special type of runoff that occurs whenever precipitation from rainfall or snowmelt fall on and flow over impervious surfaces such as concrete, rooftops, sidewalks, and driveways. Stormwater runoff enters streams from conveyances more quickly than natural runoff. Stormwater runoff can enter a stream directly from a rooftop. For example, rain falls on a roof, flows to the gutter and downspout, and to a pipe that leads directly to a stream. When this water drains directly to a stream, the stream has to handle more water with more force in a shorter amount of time than what it has normally received under natural conditions. When stormwater runoff overpowers a stream it can erode streambanks and cause flooding more than it has in the past.