

# What is the MS4?

The MS4 is short for “Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System.” This is the series of drains in the street, ditches and underground pipes that convey stormwater runoff to waterways within the Town of Berthoud. This runoff does not go to Berthoud’s Wastewater Treatment Facility and can contribute to water pollution in local waterways if hazardous, as well as seemingly harmless “natural” (dirt, leaves, grass, etc.) waste is disposed of improperly into the MS4.

Berthoud is designated by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) as a Phase II MS4 and is permitted as such. This designation impacts how the Town of Berthoud manages runoff, regulated by the CDPHE, from rain and snowmelt on our streets, construction sites, businesses and other areas. Factors such as population, growth trends and proximity to waterways all influence the process. By implementing stormwater regulations, it helps ensure the discharge of the cleanest stormwater possible back into lakes, rivers, and streams.

MS4 implementation and maintenance is covered by small monthly fees on Berthoud Water utility bills. Additional fees are collected from development fees. Builders and homeowners are responsible for compliance with the MS4 requirements at all times.



**STORMWATER**

## Contact

For more information on MS4, contact:

**Town of Berthoud  
Community Development:  
970-532-2643**

**Stormwater &  
MS4 Information**



# Why is Stormwater Important?

Stormwater is runoff from precipitation (rain, melted snow or ice) that flows across the ground and off rooftops, pavement, and construction sites. It can easily pick up and carry dirt, oil, pet waste and other pollutants and drains into storm sewers. These are the drains located on the corners of sidewalks and low points on the sides of town streets. All drains lead to local waterways and bodies of water, and stormwater must be managed due to flooding concerns. Many opportunities exist however, to design features to manage stormwater as functional and attractive parts of our community. Stormwater is the source of all the water we have access to.

Keeping stormwater free of pollutants is critical to the Town of Berthoud, our downstream neighbors, and the future water quality for all of us.

## HOW TO HELP PREVENT STORMWATER POLLUTION

- Only rain goes down the drain!
- Keep your vehicle well-maintained and fix leaks. Sweep before power washing surfaces.
- Use garden and lawn products sparingly and only according to instructions on the package. Do not over fertilize lawns.
- Clean up after your pet – even in your backyard. Pet waste contains harmful bacteria and should never be disposed of in any storm sewer, detention pond or ditch.



# How Does This Affect Me?



Runoff from precipitation happens everywhere in Berthoud and everyone plays a part in keeping it clean.

The Clean Water Act of 1972 established the structure of regulations on discharging stormwater to our streams, rivers, and lakes to assure all residents have the right to clean water for drinking, growing food and recreation. All water that comes to us starts as stormwater and it is vital that all residents are aware of this precious resource.

## The Water Cycle



All the water on earth has been "recycled" for over 4 billion years through the cycle starting and ending with surface runoff and groundwater, evaporation and transpiration, condensation and precipitation.

Much of the water is salt water in oceans, and much of the fresh water is frozen in the polar ice caps.

The water cycle is more complicated than one might believe. The paths and influences of water on the Earth's ecosystems are not completely understood, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Studies continue to increase our knowledge and understanding of the complex issues surrounding water.

- Minimize ice melt use and choose environmentally friendly alternatives such as coffee grounds or baking soda.
- Walk, bike or take public transportation to work or school. Air pollution is washed out of the air by stormwater and becomes water pollution.
- Don't drain pools, fountains or hot tubs in the storm drain. Let the chlorine dissipate to zero then drain in a landscaped area.



- Get your car washed at the car wash.
- Install a rain barrel to capture runoff and apply it to your landscape or for washing patio furniture.
- Do not sweep grass clippings into the street or dump it down the storm drains. This can clog the sewer and lead to flooding – Not to mention... it's illegal!
- If you see a spill or any material that has made its way to a storm drain, ditch, or waterway, contact the stormwater program at 970-532-2643.