

ABOUT THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU STORM DRAIN SYSTEM

The City's storm drain system is a vast network of underground pipes and open channels that were designed to prevent flooding. Runoff drains from the street into the gutter, and enters the system through an opening in the curb called a catch basin. Catch basins serve as the neighborhood entry point for the journey into the ocean.

Water in the storm drain system receives no treatment or filtering process and is completely separate from the City's sewer system.

The graphics at right show the path sequence that urban runoff takes as it travels through the storm drain system.



1. Curbside catch basins are the primary points of entry for urban runoff. From there, runoff...
2. ...flows into pipes that empty into...
3. ...open drainage channels and eventually discharge to...
4. ...streams and the ocean.

The storm drain system is completely separate from the sanitary sewer system.



The City's storm drain system consists of more than 20,000 catch basins and other inlets and over 670 miles network of underground pipes and channels that discharge directly into our coastal waters.

FLOOD CONTROL

The original storm drain system was developed in the early 20th century. As the City began to grow, rainwater that was once absorbed by miles of undeveloped land began to run off the newly paved and developed areas, leading to an increased amount of water flowing into streams.

These streams could not contain the increased amount of water and flooded. In response, many streams were lined with concrete, initiating the development of an underground urban drainage system. As the City and County of Honolulu continued to grow, a complex drainage system developed.

Today, more than 20,000 catch basins, almost 700 miles of underground pipes and open channels comprise the City's storm drain system. Runoff from the City system reaches the ocean through approximately 2,200 storm drain outfalls or openings at the end of a storm drain system that allows water to flow into a channel, stream or the ocean.

POLLUTANTS FOUND IN THE STORM DRAIN SYSTEM

City crews have found an unusual collection of items that have been dumped or have made their way into storm drain channels. These items include:

- Chicken Cages
- Surfboards
- Motorcycle
- Soiled Diapers
- Automotive Parts
- Mattresses
- Stuffed Animals
- Exercise Bike
- Shopping Carts
- Basketballs, Baseballs, and Golf Balls
- Baby Strollers

