

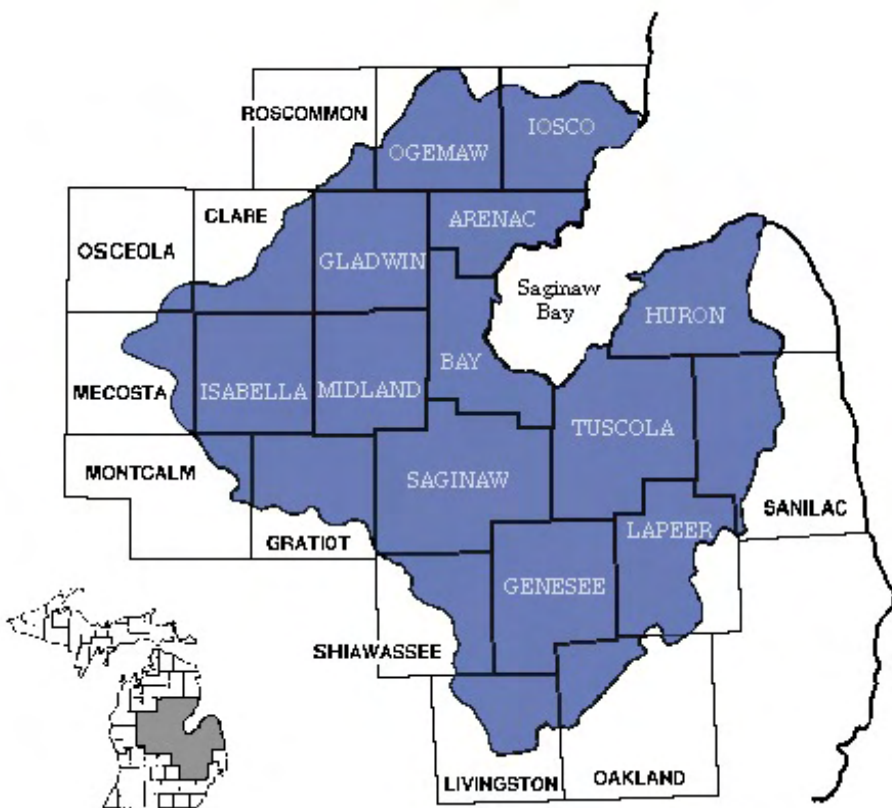
# BASWA

## BAY AREA STORM WATER AUTHORITY

*“Working together to improve water quality”*

Fact: The Saginaw Bay Watershed is home to more than 90 species of fish.

Fact: The Saginaw Bay Watershed contains 7,000 miles of rivers and streams.



Fact: The Saginaw Bay Watershed is home to 1.4 million people.

Fact: The Saginaw Bay Watershed is nearly 8,700 square miles in size.

Fact: As a Bay County resident, You live in a Watershed!

Fact: All or part of 22 Michigan counties contribute to the Saginaw Bay Watershed.

*Help save the Bay!  
What you do each day can stop storm water  
pollution and improve the waters of the Saginaw Bay!*

## And the survey says:

In January 2007, BASWA conducted a survey of Bay County residents. Only 25% of those surveyed knew they lived in a watershed and 47% did not know how to identify/report an illicit discharge. To have a cleaner Saginaw Bay, more residents must understand what pollutes storm water.

To contact BASWA with any questions or comments, call the Bay County Drain Office at (989) 895-4290

## What is a Watershed?

A watershed is the area of land that drains to a common waterway, such as a stream, lake, estuary, or wetland. Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes. They cross county, state, and national boundaries. No matter where you are, you're in a watershed and your actions can directly affect it.

Water quality is a reflection of its watershed. This is true whether talking about surface water (rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands) or groundwater. Almost all watersheds deliver a variety of pollution to their downstream water bodies like the Saginaw Bay. It is rare for any surface waters to be impacted by only one source of pollution. With few exceptions, every land-use activity is a potential source of water pollution.

## Illicit Discharge

An illicit discharge is an illegal connection or tie-in to a storm sewer or road ditch. These storm water systems are designed to convey storm water runoff to nearby lakes and streams to prevent flooding, but they are not designed to handle flow from sources such as gutter downspouts. Generally, there is no treatment to storm water runoff before it empties into a receiving stream. Dumping anything other than storm water into a storm drain is illegal and considered an illicit discharge. One example is discharging your laundry water to a county drain or road ditch.

## How do you spot an illicit discharge?

Look for makeshift pipes or hoses that lead to a storm drain or body of water. Watch for stains, unusual odors, structural damage to streets or gutters and abnormal vegetative growth in lakes and streams.



Illicit discharges allow pollutants to enter lakes and streams causing public health concerns, unpleasant odors/color and harming aquatic and animal life. Pollution can also lead to excessive growth of vegetation.

Call The Drain Office at (989) 895-4290 if you suspect an illicit discharge

### Bay Area Storm Water Authority

*"Working together to improve water quality."*

Bangor Charter Township \* Frankenlust Township \* Fraser Township  
Portsmouth Charter Township \* Monitor Charter Township  
Hampton Charter Township \* Kawkawlin Township \* City of Bay City  
City of Essexville \* Bay County Road Commission \* County of Bay City