

May 7, 2024

## **Adopt-A-Storm Drain Program**

To help protect our local waterways and educate people on the importance of allowing only rain in the storm drain, we are inviting Red Deerians to Adopt-A-Storm Drain. Below are the answers to some frequently asked questions about this new program.

### **1. Why do we need to clear storm drains?**

Anything that enters a storm drain in the city ends up directly in the Red Deer River. This river is the source of our drinking water and having pollutants enter the waterway untreated can harm the environment, the species living in the river, and our drinking water.

As rain and snow run-off flows across sidewalks, driveways, grass and asphalt, it picks up pollutants and carries them into the storm drain – also known as a catch basin. Hazardous substances spilled, dumped, or left on the ground are washed into the storm water collection system and the river. These materials harm our environment and our source of drinking water.

### **2. Why doesn't The City clear storm drains, shouldn't this stuff be filtered out through the Wastewater Treatment Plant?**

Our stormwater system is designed to carry stormwater through the city and deposit it back into the Red Deer River. During the spring street sweeping program, The City collects debris from roadways and sidewalks to prevent it from entering storm drains and therefore, the river. This annual activity is helpful to keep some of the debris out of the river, but making a regular habit to clear debris around storm drains will make a great difference in protecting the Red Deer River.

### **3. What do I need to do?**

When you adopt a storm drain, you will check the storm drain for debris and other potential blockages at regular intervals. We recommend once a month. Bring along a broom, gloves and garbage bag and clear any leaves, branches, etc from around the storm drain. Do not open the storm drain. When you adopt a storm drain, we will provide you with all the information you need to complete your role.

### **4. How often do I need to check the storm drain?**

We recommend checking once a month, possibly a little more in the spring and fall when snow is melting, and leaves are falling as these are the times when most debris is commonly blocking storm drains. If you know precipitation is expected, take a look before the rain or snow starts to fall.

### **5. Why are storm drains important?**

Storm drains provide an easy method for rain and storm water to return to the river without damaging infrastructure. When these drains are clogged or blocked, it can cause flooding and other damage to private and public property.

### **6. Can I name my storm drain?**

Yes, you can give your storm drain a fun new name; however, profane and derogatory names will not be permitted. The City has final approval.

**7. What is the time commitment?**

We anticipate that keeping your storm drain free of debris will take a few minutes a month or before inclement weather approaches. The time commitment may be longer in fall, when leaves gather near storm drains or winter/spring when ice may develop around the drain causing water to pool as temperatures rise.

There is no set time commitment for how long you maintain your storm drain and you can end your term at any time.

**8. Should I remove the grate while I clear debris or if debris is stuck in the drain?**

No. For your own safety and the safety of others, never remove a grate or manhole cover. If the storm drain isn't draining properly and you believe there is a concern under the grate, contact Environmental Services at 403-342-8750 or use the Report-A-Problem tool on our website at [reddeer.ca/ReportAProblem](http://reddeer.ca/ReportAProblem) and The City will dispatch a crew to investigate. Please note that it may take a couple of business days for crews to respond. If it is an emergency situation such as a missing grate, please call instead of reporting online.

**9. What if I clear debris and water is still pooling?**

Call Environmental Services at 403-342-8750 or use the Report-A-Problem tool on our website at [reddeer.ca/ReportAProblem](http://reddeer.ca/ReportAProblem) and The City will dispatch a crew to investigate. Please note that it may take a couple of business days for crews to respond. If it is an emergency situation, please call instead of reporting online.

**For more information, contact:**

Community and Public Relations  
The City of Red Deer