



# City of Ringgold

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Ringgold, GA 30736

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## **Hazards of Illegal Dumping & Illicit Discharge**

An illicit discharge occurs when the municipal separate storm sewer system is contaminated with something other than stormwater (except firefighting activities and permitted discharges). This can occur when illegal connections to the storm drain system are established from businesses or commercial establishments. Failing septic systems, illegal dumping practices, and the improper disposal of sewage from recreational practices (boating or camping) are other known sources of an illicit discharge. The term 'illicit' is used because the stormwater system is not designed to accept, process, or discharge these types of wastes. Stormwater drainage systems are designed to capture the rain water, nothing else. Hazards Associated with Illicit Discharges • Heavy metals and organic toxicants can cause problems with treatment systems – locally, and down stream • Pathogens and toxic pollutants (from industrial and other sources) can cause disease through the skin or by ingestion • Landscape runoff, construction site dewatering, automobile washing, and laundry waste can cause excessive algal growth – Threatening aquatic life

## **Hazards Associated with Illegal Dumping**

- **Health Risk:** Dump sites provide a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Rodents, insects, and other vermin that are attracted to dump sites often are the carriers of disease.
- **Fire Hazard:** Dump material can spontaneously combust or be set afire by an arson. Dumping often occurs in forested areas, leaving it subject to fires and having a negative impact on plants and wildlife.
- **Flooding:** Dumped waste can block ravines, creeks, culverts, and drainage inlets; impacting homes, and structures.
- **Water Quality:** Dumped waste contains chemicals that may contaminate groundwater and stormwater – Our drinking water source.
- **Decrease of Property Value:** Dumping often attracts additional dumping and criminal activity. The community becomes unattractive to commercial and residential developers.
- **Rise in the maintenance costs:** Clearing illegally dumped waste is a burden on the local government as it is very costly to manage. Costs are often passed to the citizens in the form of increased service fees or property taxes. To report illegal dumping or an illicit discharge, call our office (706) 935- 3061.

