Snow is Stormwater, Too!

The next time it snows, keep an eye on the color of the snow along the sides of the road. It most likely will turn grayish or brownish in color due to the sand, salt, oil, trash, and other pollutants collecting in it. Then, as that snow melts, it washes those pollutants to the nearest storm drain or waterway causing a water quality issue.

None of our stormwater is treated or cleaned at the water treatment facility, so It’s important to take steps to prevent stormwater pollutants from coming into contact with the snow. Here are a few tips to consider:

* Pile snow where it will have the most opportunity to soak into the ground.
* Make sure the nearest storm drains are clear and do not pile snow on them.
* Shovel early and shovel often! The more snow and ice you remove, the less salt you will have to use.
* Consider using an ice scraper or flat metal shovel to remove stubborn snow and ice.

**Did you know...**most deicing chemicals, such as salt, end up in our soil or in our local creeks? Melting snow flows into the stormwater system and picks up salt as it travels over surfaces like roads, sidewalks, and driveways.

* A single piece of salt or ice melt can go a long way in melting ice and if the salt is crunching underfoot, too much has been put down.
* Sweep up excess salt or sand from the dry pavement after it is no longer being put to use.

You can learn more about the impacts of salt on our communities and the environment by visiting National Stormwater Center online at npdes.com.

