

PRIOR LAKE-SPRING LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT

Prevent illegal spills to our water

BY MEGHAN LITSEY

When you think of an “illegal spill,” what comes to mind? An old, gloomy factory? Mysterious substances leaving rusty old pipes? Believe it or not, illegal spills (or “illicit discharges”) are not exclusive to industrial sources. In fact, illicit discharge is fairly common and may be going on in your neighborhood right now.

By definition, an illicit discharge is an unlawful act of disposing (or dumping, spilling, emitting or other discharge) of any substance other than stormwater into the streets, gutters, ditches and ponds that make up our stormwater drainage system, or directly into streams or lakes themselves.

What we do at home affects our local water resources, because our storm drains and ditches are connected to nearby lakes, rivers and streams. Even some fairly

common activities could be considered illicit discharge, like dumping leaves, grass clippings, motor oil, paint or other household hazard wastes into a storm drain, allowing discharge from failing septic systems, and improper disposal of sewage from boating or camping. The result is untreated garbage and filth that contribute high levels of pollutants, like heavy metals, toxins, oil and grease, solvents, nutrients, viruses and bacteria to our lakes and streams — which is why we all need to be aware of what goes into our storm drains.

What can you do about illicit discharges? It's simple: only rain in the drain. Be a good storm drain steward and consider the following tips to prevent illicit discharge in your neighborhood:

- Take a moment to sweep or rake leaves and grass clippings out of the street in

front of your house. When washed into nearby lakes, rivers and streams via storm drains or ditches, the leaves and clippings become a major source of phosphorus, the nutrient that propels algae blooms in the summer. Dispose of leaves and grass clippings by composting them in your yard or bring them to our local compost facility. Visit the SMSC Organics Recycling Facility website for more info at: www.smscorf.com.

- Please remember to scoop your poop. Pet waste contains bacteria that can harm people. Pet owners can improve water quality by throwing their (bagged) pet waste into a trashcan.
- Dispose of old or unwanted lawn and household chemicals properly. Bring your household hazardous wastes (paint, motor oil, etc.) to the Scott County Household Hazardous Waste Facility. Call (952) 496-8652 for drop-off

locations and times.

- If you own a car, make sure to maintain it so it does not leak oil or other fluids. Be sure to wash your car on the grass or visit a car wash so the dirt and soap does not flow down the driveway and into the nearest storm drain.

If you see anyone discharging any substance other than stormwater in roadside ditches and storm drains, please report it to Pete Young, water resources engineer at the city of Prior Lake, at (952) 447-9831. For potentially hazardous materials and petroleum spills, call 911 first when there is an immediate threat to life or property; if there is a potential public safety or environmental threat, call the Minnesota Duty Officer Program at (651) 649-5451 or 1-800-422-0798.

Meghan Litsey is the outreach specialist with the Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District.

CELEBRATE!

ENGAGEMENT

Kinsella - Seurer

Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Seurer of Prior Lake announce the engagement of their daughter Lisa to Ryan Daniel Kinsella, son of Daniel and Marilyn Kinsella of Waterville, MN.

The future bride graduated from Prior Lake High School and The University of Minnesota. She is employed as a Forensic Scientist at the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, St. Paul.

The future groom is a graduate of Burnsville High School and attended Moorhead State University. He is employed at Thomson Reuters as a Technical Coordinator. A September 2014 wedding is planned.



Ryan and Lisa

Angler program open to young ice fishers

One of Minnesota’s most popular winter activities, ice fishing, will have a new twist this winter. For the first time, young anglers will be able to participate in a statewide youth ice fishing season.

The American Angler Leagues’ model introduces fishing to children in a structured environment similar to youth sports.

The ice fishing season

will be open to boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 17. Anglers will be allowed to fish anytime on any Minnesota lake from Jan. 1 to Feb. 23. Using the American Angler Leagues’ standardized scoring system, anglers will earn points for their catch, which will be tracked throughout the season at www.americananglerleagues.com.

On Feb. 23, all registered anglers will be invited to fish in the first-ever Minnesota State Youth Ice Fishing Tournament on Lake Minnetonka. Anglers will be allowed to fish anywhere on the lake with an opportunity for recognition and prizes.

Registration will begin on Nov. 1, online, via mail or in person at the St. Paul Ice Fishing and Winter Sports Show.

Still time to join G-Team

G-Team Snowboard has opened registration for winter training at Buck Hill. Online registration is available at www.thegteam.com.

The G-Team, one of Minnesota’s premier programs, provides training for snowboarders who have their basic skills to advanced riders. Riders train with professional coaches two to three days a week and can letter in snowboard with their local high school and have competition opportunities.

For more information to the Website, email coach@thegteam.com or call (952) 846-4317.

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