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WHAT IMPACTS OUR WATER QUALITY?

Sources of nutrients and microbes to coastal waters are nearly everywhere, but often go unnoticed. Learn to recognize these sources as a first step to avoid, minimize, and mitigate them during your daily activities.

1 STORMWATER

Most stormwater drains empty into local streams and rivers that discharge to bays and estuaries without treatment. About 850 billion gallons of untreated sewage and stormwater are released to US waters each year.

2 RECREATIONAL FISHING & BOATING

Wastewater and debris enter waterways when people dump human waste or trash overboard or empty onboard bathrooms into the water. Please lawfully dispose of onboard waste at pump out stations.

3 WASTEWATER TREATMENT & FAILING INFRUSTRUCTURE

Outdated septic systems and pumping stations can leak untreated wastewater. Support maintenance of treatment facilities and infrastructure to keep up with community needs.

4 OUTFALL PIPES

Outfall pipes deliver animal waste, road runoff, and other debris via stormwater. Some homes have unpermitted connections to stormwater drains.

5 WASTE DISPOSAL

Pet waste, household chemicals, and agricultural treatments can pollute waterways with excess nutrients leading to algal blooms, depleted oxygen, and fish kills.

6 HOUSE BOATS & FISH CAMPS

Illegal dumping of waste from house boats and fish camps can deliver microbes such as *E. coli* and fecal coliforms to the water. Properly dispose of waste products to prevent environmental and human health risks.

7 IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

Roads, parking lots, driveways, sidewalks, and buildings increase runoff into coastal waters. Use porous building materials when possible and design landscapes to include planted areas to minimize impacts.

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- See our data, learn how you can improve local water quality, and report possible spills or other concerns at **www.disl.org/wastewaterfootprint**.
- Share, modify, and use copies of our factsheets in your office or classroom to continue improving water quality on the Gulf coast.
- Feel free to contact us at **wastewaterfootprint@gmail.com** with any questions or comments.

Our wastewater footprint

How does wastewater affect water quality & shellfish safety?

Learn about science-based products
to guide planning and resource management

https://www.disl.org/wastewaterfootprint

Find data and guidance on what <u>YOU</u> can do to improve local water quality, based on science conducted here on the northcentral Gulf of Mexico coast.

- ✓ **Our Human Footprint**—A summary of water quality problems common to the northern Gulf of Mexico and other coastal waters world-wide
- ✓ **Grand Bay Estuary System**—An introduction to the Grand Bay Estuary as a benchmark water quality study site
- ✓ **Methods & Results**—Research methods and data collected to assess our wastewater footprint
- ✓ **What YOU Can Do**—Recommendations for actions <u>you</u> can take to improve water quality and <u>where to report concerns</u>
- ✓ **Take It With You**—Use our water quality information packet to add value to your eco-tour business, classroom lessons, or public meeting.
- ✓ **Resources**—Additional information, including links to project partners and how to find monitoring data for your area.

We welcome feedback on improvements and additions to content. Please email suggestions or questions to wastewaterfootprint@disl.org