

Town of Groton Catch Basin Cleaning Program



In order to direct the flow of rainwater and prevent flooding, the Town maintains a storm sewer system. This system is separate from the sanitary sewer system and does not connect to the Water Pollution Control Facility. Rainwater enters the storm sewer system through a grate in the street called a “catch basin”. Catch basins are connected to storm drains that discharge rainwater runoff directly into the nearest brook, river, pond or Long Island Sound. Catch basins help prevent some pollutants from entering the storm sewer system by settling the solids out. Eventually these pollutants (such as sand, leaves, yard waste, and trash) accumulate in the bottom of the catch basin and need to be cleaned out.

The Department of Public Works (DPW) Roads and Streets Division conducts catch basin cleaning for all roads within the Town except for state and private roads and federal properties. The DPW cleans the catch basins using a vactor truck (a 2003 Sterling LT-9500 Aquatech truck). The DPW crew inserts an 8” suction hose that is attached to the vactor truck into the catch basin. The vactor truck carries 1,000 gallons of water to loosen the debris to assist cleaning and has a payload capacity of 10 cubic yards. During cleaning, the catch basin is also inspected to determine if any repairs are required such as fixing broken asphalt or replacing a broken grate. The DPW maintains approximately 3,285 catch basins.



Motor oil, gasoline, antifreeze, pet waste, cigarette butts, cleaning products, pesticides, fertilizers and trash are all pollutants that can be washed by rainwater into a catch basin and directly discharged into Groton’s rivers, beaches, and reservoir. These pollutants can contaminate water and result in shell fishing restrictions and beach closings. Below are some things every Groton resident can do to prevent pollutants from getting into catch basins:

- Sweep up and remove sand and litter from sidewalks and driveways to prevent these materials from being washed into a catch basin by snowmelt or rainwater runoff. Never hose them into a catch basin.
- Check your car often for drips and oil leaks and fix them promptly. Use drip pans if necessary. Don’t hose leaks into a catch basin, use kitty litter or sand to absorb and dispose of in your household garbage.
- Compost or mulch yard waste. Don’t leave it in the street or sweep it into a catch basin. Leaves (no plastic bags or grass) may be brought to the Flanders Road Transfer Station for composting.
- Bring household products that contain chemicals, such as insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, and used motor oil and other auto fluids to a regional Household Hazardous Waste collection event. Never pour them onto the ground or into a catch basin.
- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly; avoid applying them before a rainstorm, and use organic, slow-release fertilizers.
- If you see a catch basin that is clogged or full, report it to the DPW for cleaning.

Report Illegal Dumping.

If you observe someone dumping anything into a catch basin, immediately report it to the DPW at (860) 448-4083.