

# AUBURN'S

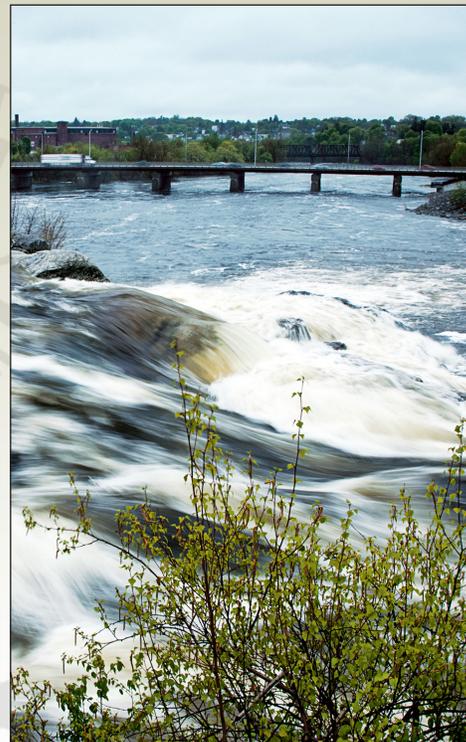
## Drainage System & Clean Water



The City of Auburn contains over 95 miles of stormwater drainage pipe, 115 culverts, 90 miles of ditches, and over 5,000 manholes and catchbasins. This infrastructure provides drainage that protects roads and parking areas from premature failure and properties from flooding. Adequately sized drainage systems are also an important utility for new development and urban expansion. Just like any other infrastructure, drainage systems require periodic rehabilitation, repair, and maintenance to continue to function effectively.

Unfortunately, drainage systems also carry pollution during rain events and snow melt — this can include pet waste, oil, trash, and any other materials found on lawns, streets, and parking lots. This runoff is transported through the system, which in Auburn discharges into Lake Auburn, Taylor Pond, the Little Androscoggin River, and the Androscoggin River, among others.

Over the last 10 years, these discharges have been regulated under the Clean Water Act, and Auburn is one of 30 communities in Maine that must comply with these regulations. The drainage system permit is called the General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems and is known as the "MS4" permit. In general, the Maine MS4 permit obligates communities to maintain their drainage systems and reduce the potential for pollution to enter the drainage system.



## The MS4 permit requires communities to do the following to reduce their impact on Maine water:

- 1. Implement public education programs to help the community understand its role in keeping water clean.*
- 2. Engage the public in decision-making throughout the program.*
- 3. Find and fix poorly functioning or failing septic systems that might be discharging into the drainage system.*
- 4. Ensure that construction projects do not pollute runoff with sediments and debris.*
- 5. Ensure that new development and redevelopment control and treat runoff before it leaves private property.*
- 6. Engage in municipal roadway best practices such as cleaning drainage systems, sweeping streets, and ensuring municipal activities like vehicle washing and lawn maintenance do not contribute to pollution.*

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## MS4 Permit Basics



### What is an MS4?

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*A municipal separate storm sewer system is:*

*A conveyance or system of conveyances owned by a state, city, town, or other public entity that discharges to waters of the U.S and is*

- *Designed or used for collecting or conveying stormwater*
- *Not a combined sewer*
- *Not part of a publicly owned treatment works*

### The Clean Water Act requires EPA to regulate any discharges from the MS4.

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- *In ME, DEP administers this permit*
- *Every five years a new permit is drafted and issued*
- *Each permittee (city) is required to develop and submit a Stormwater Plan consistent with the general permit*
- *Auburn is a permittee*

### Consequences for failure to comply with MS4 Permit.

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#### **Enforcement Action**

- *Notice of Violation, fines, or other penalties*
- *Consent Order*
- *Prosecution*

#### **Permit Termination or Revocation**

- *Permit Modification*
- *Stricter permit limits*
- *Denial of Permit Renewal*



### **Jeopardized Public Health & Safety**

Auburn is now entering into a new five year permit (2013-2018) and the engineering, public works, and planning staff have developed a new five year plan that outlines activities to meet the permit. The goal of this plan is to meet or exceed requirements without creating extensive new programs or undue budget burdens. The staff will be working with regional organizations such as the Auburn Water and Sewerage District, Lewiston-Auburn Water Pollution Control Authority, and the Maine Municipal Association to leverage existing programs for maximum benefit whenever possible. But the permit requirements require a certain level of municipal expenditure that cannot be avoided, particularly in relation to staffing and equipment needed to maintain the drainage system and keep streets clean (e.g. street sweeping, catchbasin cleaning, and pipe lining).