City Stormwater Quality Requirements

The major source of oil in stormwater is from automobiles either traveling on the streets or parked where the stormwater flows into the City's system. There are numerous sources of sediment including yard trimmings and leaves placed or falling in the street, soil erosion, and soil tracked onto streets from yards and unpaved areas.

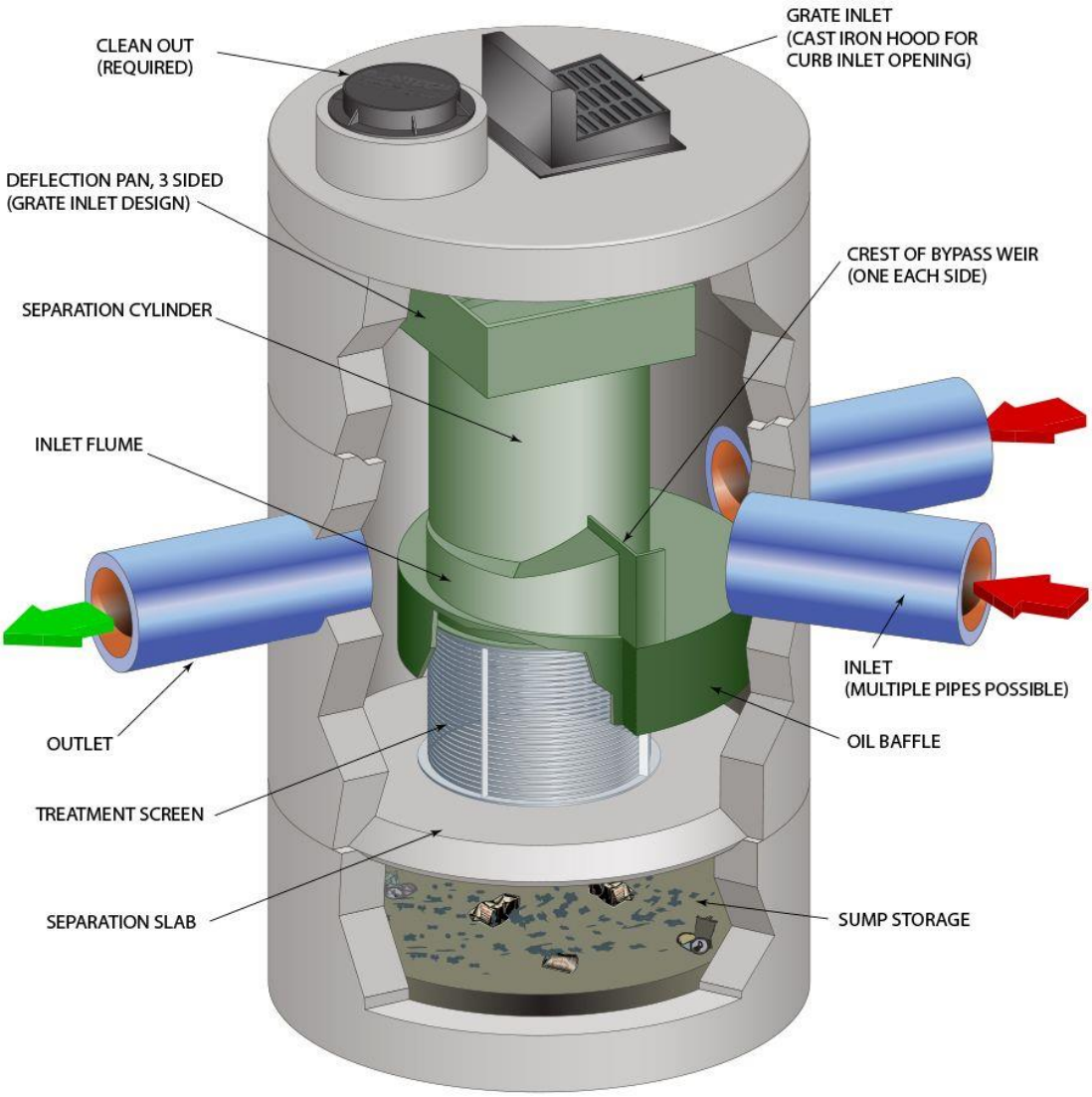
As part of the stormwater rules mandated by the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual, the City of Albany requires commercial development to treat the initial flush of rain to improve the water quality.

Based upon state of Georgia requirements that went into effect in 2020, the stormwater management system shall be designed to retain the first 1.0 inch of rainfall on the site to the maximum extent practicable; when retained on site, this first 1.0 inch of rainfall percolates slowly into the soils, recharging our groundwater. If the first 1.0 inch of rainfall can be retained onsite using runoff reduction methods, then additional water quality treatment is not required. If the City agrees with the design engineer's documentation that the 1.0 inch cannot be retained onsite, the remaining runoff from a 1.2-inch rainfall event must have additional water quality treatments.

One way to meet this requirement for additional treatment is with a water quality unit installed in the on-site stormwater system. The unit is basically a structure with two or more cells which collects and retains the sediment and oils that are in the stormwater. The unit is typically constructed of concrete or a durable plastic and is buried in the ground.

A similar device used to control petroleum runoff is the oil/water separator. This structure works like the water quality unit but is designed mainly for petroleum products. Sites required to install oil/water separators include fueling stations, parking lots with over 200 spaces, vehicle maintenance areas, and auto recycling facilities. oil/water separators are required for new developments and existing sites with 5000 square feet or more of new or redeveloped impervious areas. The devices must be designed to treat the first 1.2 inches of rainfall. Larger rainfall should bypass the devices to avoid removing the trapped sediment and oil. The oil/water separator should be installed uphill of other water quality controls to pretreat the stormwater before it enters the system.

Owners of automobiles can help reduce the amount of contaminates in our stormwater by performing regular maintenance of their vehicles and repairing any leaks as soon as possible. Homeowners can also help by keeping leaves and grass clippings out of the streets and by grassing and mulching any bare spots in their yard.



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