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WHEN IT RAINS, IT DRAINS

PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Patti J. Doss-Luna, Acting City Manager at 770-534-2365 or pdoss-luna@cityofoakwood.net

Stormwater runoff is rainwater that runs off of rooftops, lawns, driveways and streets in our neighborhoods. As it flows, it picks up dirt, leaves and grass clippings, pesticides and fertilizers, oil and grease, harmful bacteria, toxic chemicals, litter and other contaminants. All of these pollutants are carried by stormwater into storm drains and ultimately into our streams and rivers.

The City of Oakwood is implementing a new program designed to reduce pollution that flows into local storm drains and streams. City staff and representatives will soon begin walking local streams to locate pipes that discharge flow during dry weather. The discharge from those pipes will be tested to determine if it contains pollution. If pollution is present, staff will identify the source of the pollution and then work with residents, business owners, developers, etc. to eliminate the problem.

As in previous years, City representatives are continuing to inspect local businesses, such as car repair shops, restaurants and car washes, to identify potential sources of pollution (such as used oil, grease and muddy runoff and other suspicious discharges). Potential problems will be documented and educational materials distributed business owners/operators to promote improved operations and maintenance procedures. Business owners and operators can prepare for the inspections by cleaning up all litter and spills on the property, properly disposing of all contaminated soils and gravel and moving potential stormwater pollutants under cover. The goal of the effort is to find and eliminate potential sources of water pollution and to help businesses owners and operators comply with local, state and federal laws to prevent polluted stormwater runoff.

The City of Oakwood's new Stormwater Program Web Page <http://www.cityofoakwood.net/WaterAndSewer.aspx> contains a host of information on how everyone can help protect our community's critical water resources. For example, homeowners can help by minimizing excess use of lawn care chemicals and make sure all potential sources of pollutants, including pet waste, grass clippings and leaves, are disposed of properly. Developers and builders must also maintain compliance with local regulations for protecting stream buffers and preventing muddy stormwater runoff from leaving construction sites. Civic and church groups can help by conducting clean ups of neighborhoods and streams, and sponsoring and/or participating in recycling programs. Teachers can utilize the links on the web page to obtain educational material to show students why and how to protect area streams and lakes.

For more information on the City of Oakwood's Stormwater Management Program and/or to report illegal dumping, a suspicious discharge and/or inadequate erosion and sediment control, please contact Joe Hayes, Code Enforcement Officer at 770-534-2635 or jhayes@cityofoakwood.net.