

## *Storm Water Report*

**D**id you ever wonder what happens to the water from a rainstorm? The water, called stormwater, has a few possible destinations. It can soak into the soil and replenish the water table. It can evaporate into the atmosphere and replenish the clouds. Or, it can flow over the land's surface in the form of runoff, winding its way to the nearest stream or lake. Stormwater runoff doesn't care where it flows. It travels, sometimes with great velocity, over fields, across parking lots, down streets and through construction sites. Along the way, stormwater takes on "passengers" like sediment (soil), trash, motor oil, and manure. Stormwater volumes increase as we remove vegetation and create more paved surfaces. In urban settings, the stormwater must be conveyed by a system of ditches and underground pipes. Usually, stormwater runoff is untreated when it enters a stream like the Oriskany or the Sauquoit or one of their tributaries. So, how do we keep

polluted runoff from entering our favorite streams? One way is to try to prevent pollution of stormwater. Construction sites can stabilize disturbed areas by seeding and mulching. Farms can manage the nutrients applied to their fields. Towns and villages with stormwater systems can make sure that their systems are well maintained. This can include catch basin cleaning, street sweeping, and road ditch seeding. Another major pollution prevention technique is to prevent illicit hookups to the stormwater system. Illicit hookups, specifically septic systems, can significantly add to the pollution load carried by stormwater. You can help keep stormwater clean by maintaining your septic system, fertilizing your lawn at recommended rates, keeping your street free of litter, and repairing your vehicle. That's right... if you repair leaks from your vehicle you'll be protecting our water resources. If you'd like to know more about stormwater pollution prevention techniques, please feel free to contact the Soil and Water Conservation District at 736-3334.