

# Adopt a Drain Campaign

#FLOODED

Grades 5 - 12

Activity



## Main Objective

Learners will create a campaign to raise awareness about litter pollution around drains and storm sewers. They will also clean their adopted drain and assess the campaigns outcome.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of this activity learners will:

- Create a campaign to raise awareness about litter pollution around drains and storm sewers that find its way into local streams, rivers and oceans

## Materials Required

- Internet-enabled device
- Assessment Rubric
- Flood:ED Backgrounder
- Broom
- Rake
- Trash grabber (optional)
- Gloves
- Orange cone and/or safety vest
- Snow shovel or dustpan
- Pail or yard waste bag

## Length of Activity: 1.5 - 2 hours

**Step 1+2:** Intro to drain adoption campaigns and find storm drains around your school.

**Step 3+4:** Research what happens after rain water and pollution going into a storm drain.

**Step 5:** Create educational materials about research.

**Step 6:** Clean up the identified storm drain and see your campaign in action!

**Step 7:** Adopt and monitor your storm drain.

## Activity

### Step 1: Learn About Adopting a Drain Campaign

Begin by learning about Trout Unlimited Canada's program called Yellow Fish Road™ to understand what are drain campaigns:

 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGPEVM63ZAY&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGPEVM63ZAY&feature=emb_logo)

Below is another organization that works towards keeping drains clean:

 <https://www.adopt-a-drain.org/>

Just like these awesome organizations, you can also create a similar campaign to raise awareness against polluting drains with pollution, that ends up in local

### Step 2: Find Storm Drains

Locate storm drains in your school and neighbourhood. If you have completed the [Flooding Mapping Tour](#) activity, you would already have a list and map of all the drains in your area!

### Step 3: Where Does the Rain Go?

Research where the storm drain would bring its water and answer the following questions:

1. Does it go to a creek or a river?
2. Does the rainwater go through any treatment before it enters natural bodies of water?
3. Why is it important to keep the storm drain clean?

Answering these questions will help you prepare an informed and effective messaging and awareness campaign!

## Step 4: Identify Pollution Types

Ask learners to answer the following questions:

1. What kind of litter ends up in the drains?
2. Which ones are the closest sources of pollution?

Here are some key pollution sources to target:

- Litter – cigarette butts, single use plastics, and other garbage
- Organic matter – pet waste, leaves, grass clippings etc.
- Pollution runoff – oily residues and car wash soaps, pesticides and fertilizers.

## Step 5: Educate and Communicate

- Create brochures or posters to educate your neighbourhood and learner body about the common pollutants finding their way to the storm drains.
- You can also create a map that shows how the water from the storm drain finds its way to the environment and wildlife, and why we should prevent pollution and remove litter.

## Step 6: Drain Clean Up Plan

- With the storm drains located, grab the materials listed to clean up the drains in your local area.
- After cleaning the drains by collecting any garbage and litter, dispose off the waste responsibly to proper waste disposal sites – garbage, compostable waste, recyclables etc. (check how your local municipality sorts and discards waste)
- Arrange for learner, facility, or even community volunteers to help clean up and maintain the drains on a regular basis.
- With a successful information campaign, you should be able to do this less and less!
- If possible, and safe to do so, while cleaning the drain identify the type and quantity of the debris found. Use the attached table to track your findings. Make sure to write the date and give each storm drain a name.
- Graph the results of your findings.

## Step 7: Educate and Communicate

As a class determine which storm drain(s) you will adopt for the school year. Can you maintain all the ones you did on the initial clean up? Once you have determined them identify them on a map and create a plan for keeping the drain clean by identifying how frequently you will monitor and clean the drain.

## Step 8: Monitor Your Drains

Make sure to monitor your drains with the identified plan. Fill out the **Storm Drain Maintenance Log** table attached below each time you go so you can compare the debris found between the different dates and storm drains to see the efforts of your awareness campaign! Compile the results of the findings into a large graph at the end of the year and discuss the results. What do your results show? What changed over time? Were there differences between months? Why?

### Things to Watch Out For:



- Please be mindful of your safety while cleaning to drains!
- Never remove the grate – only clean the surface and the area around it
- Wear gloves to protect your hands from anything sharp or harmful near the drain as you clean up
- Wear bright or reflective clothing and put orange cones around the area to be visible to cars. Assign one person to stand behind and watch out for cars.
- Springtime is a great time for cleaning up drains! As the snow melts during springtime, lots of debris, cigarette butts, and other garbage collected over the winter come to surface and wash down the drain.
- With springtime, lots of people are also gardening! Remind people to turn on the sprinklers only on sunny days, instead of running it everyday, even when it rains! It is also important to install sprinklers properly, so the water won't run onto the streets, carrying fertilizer runoff with it.

## Storm Drain Maintenance Log

Storm Drain Name	Date of Clean Up	What did you find while cleaning the drain?	Names of Participants