Our urban environment has created an ongoing water pollution problem that occurs when rainwater, washing activities or over-irrigation flows untreated from buildings, yards, sidewalks, roads, and parking areas into the Santa Monica Bay. This type of pollution is called urban runoff.

The City of Santa Monica works to shape policies that influence the design, construction, and long-term management of new and existing developments to eliminate or reduce urban runoff pollution from its source.

Rainwater and stormwater are now considered a resource, as this project demonstrates, rather than a potential flooding hazard needing to be quickly ushered off to sea.

A cleaner Santa Monica Bay means a healthier marine ecosystem and improved quality of life for Santa Monica’s residents, visitors and businesses alike.

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This In-Line Storm Drain Demonstration Project harvests stormwater for treatment and infiltration (the system treats the incoming water and allows it to be slowly absorbed by the soil where it receives further treatment).

This innovative strategy of harvesting stormwater, by inserting an in-line treatment and infiltration system into an existing storm drain, can be replicated in any community due to its simplicity and unobtrusive design placing beneath streets and parkways.

Completed in 2013, this project demonstrates the feasibility of harvesting runoff to recharge groundwater for future extraction, reducing dependence on imported water and removing water pollution from entering Santa Monica Bay.

More information at: sustainablesm.org/runoff

Funding for this project was approved by the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, and has been provided in full or in part through an agreement with the State Water Resources Control Board. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission or the State Water Resources Control Board, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.

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