TEACHER'S GUIDE TO A STORM DRAIN WALK

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: To increase student awareness of storm drain systems and drainage patterns in urban watershed areas.

ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVE: To prevent litter and automotive fluids from entering the storm drain system.

PRECAUTIONS: This activity involves a walk around the school grounds, close to the curbs and streets. Review traffic safety precautions before beginning the walk.

MATERIALS: A copy of the school map master for each student, one quart of water.

PROCEDURE:

1. Have students draw a simple map of the school using the worksheet provided, including parking lots, playgrounds, and the surrounding streets. Review the map in class to make certain the students are correctly oriented. Depending on the age of the students, you may wish to prepare the maps.

2. Take a walk around your school, paying special attention to curbs, gutters, storm drain openings, and drainage ditches. Students should add these features to their maps and fill in names of streets if they didn't know them. Students should answer the questions on the map worksheet.

3. Pour a quart of water into a street gutter (fairly close to a storm drain opening if there is one near the school). If there are no storm drain openings on your streets, there may be dips in the road at the intersections to direct storm water downhill (these are called cross gutters). Or, there may be a drain opening on the school grounds. Try to find a location where students will be able to observe the flow of the water. Have students follow the water and discuss the following questions:

a. Where does the water go? Does it follow the curb? Does it go into a storm drain opening? (Curbs and gutters are engineered specifically to remove water. You may be able to compare the differences between curbed and uncurbed streets.)

b. Where does the water go after it enters the storm drain opening? (It ultimately enters a stream or San Diego Bay. It does <u>not</u> go to a treatment plant.)

Have the students ever seen water in the gutter when it hasn't been raining? Where do they think this water might come from? (People watering their lawns or washing their cars.)

d. When it rains, what happens to the litter and oil stains in parking lots, streets and gutters. (It will get washed into the storm drain system and end up in the receiving body of water.)

4. Back in the classroom, review the completed maps and discuss the questions.

SCHOOL MAP

YOUR NAME: _____ SCHOOL NAME: _____

Draw a map of your school. Fill the names of the steets around your school.

1. Are there curbs and gutters at the edges of the streets?_____

2. Are there storm drain openings in the streets or by the curbs? Put an X on the map at each opening. How many are there?_____

3. Is there litter on the ground?_____In the gutter?_____

4. Are there cars parked in the street or in a school parking lot?_____ Are there oil stains in the street or the school parking lot?_____