

Frequently Asked Questions

adoptadrain.sfwater.org

Link to [flyer](#) on Adopt a Drain webpage.

1. When should I clear my drain?

It's best to clear the drain before it starts raining to help prevent flooding, and after it rains to clean up any debris that has materialized. Once you sign up, you'll receive periodic email notifications prior to large storms so you can clean your drain(s) before it rains.

2. What are the instructions on how to clear my drain?

- If possible, clear the drain before it starts raining.
- Put leaves and other natural material in the green compost bin. Put trash in the black garbage bin.
- Clear about 10 feet on both sides of the drain.
- Medical waste or needles? Construction debris? Drain clogged beneath the grate?
[Report it to the City's Customer Service Center, 311](#) (or dial 3-1-1).

Please note that the city will not be responsible for any injuries or incidents that may occur while cleaning your drain.

3. How can I find out which drain I adopted?

On the Adopt a Drain website, the "My drains" section contains the name and the address of the drain you have adopted. Your drain/s will appear on the map as orange icons.

4. What is the City doing to ensure that storm drains stay clear of debris?

City crews deep clean between 5,000-9,000 catch basins each year using large vacuum trucks. The SFPUC operates and maintains 25,000+ storm drains and 1,000 miles of combined sewer pipes, which collect and treat sanitary sewage from homes and businesses as well as street runoff.

5. What are the colored dots on the sidewalks in front of the drains throughout the City?

The dots signify that the Bicycle Courier Team for the SFPUC's Mosquito Abatement Program has been to that location and used water soluble larvicide to ensure that the sewers are mosquito free.

6. How do I abandon a drain I have adopted?

Click on orange icon for the drain you want to abandon and then click on "Abandon this drain" inside the message that appears.

7. How do I change the name of a drain I have adopted?

The best way to change the name of your drain is to abandon your drain, readopt it and give it a new name.

8. What if there is a drain missing from the list of drains on the website?

Our data is not always accurate about the 25K drains throughout San Francisco; we rely on people to inform us. Simply email us and we will update our database. Thank you!

9. Can I adopt a drain if I don't have access to a computer?

Yes, just email us at RainReadySF@sfgov.org or call **(415) 554-3289** and notify us of the location of the drain you want to adopt and if you would like to give it a name. We will go online and adopt that specific drain for you so others know the drain has been claimed.

10. Is it possible to adopt a rain garden too?

We do not currently have an official program that enables people to adopt rain gardens but we appreciate your interest! We would love to put you in touch with staff who are developing a program for residents to adopt other assets. Email us at RainReadySF@sfgov.org.

11. If I missed the VIP event, how can I get tools/supplies?

Please email us at RainReadySF@sfgov.org. We might have another event scheduled soon, and will notify you of the date/time, otherwise let us know that you are requesting tools for Adopt a Drain and we may be able to coordinate a time for you to come to 525 Golden Gate Ave. and pick up supplies.