

Kinnickinnic River Watershed

The Kinnickinnic River Watershed is the smallest (33 square miles) and most urban of the Milwaukee River Basin watersheds (Figure 9). The watershed is located within the southern portion of Milwaukee County and contains 25 miles of perennial streams, no lakes and seven park ponds. The Kinnickinnic River is the only named stream, and comprises about half of the total stream miles in the watershed.

Land cover in this watershed is mostly urban (78%), with grasslands (16%) and forests (4%) creating open spaces. Remaining wetlands comprise only 0.3 percent of the land area. Portions of the cities of Milwaukee, Cudahy, West Milwaukee, West Allis and South Milwaukee, as well as the entire City of St. Francis are the major municipal areas represented within the Kinnickinnic River Watershed.

Most of the streams within this watershed have been extensively modified through straightening, enclosure or concrete lining. This watershed drains the General Mitchell International Airport (GMIA) lands, which has a history of discharging airplane deicing fluid (glycol), associated metals and other contaminants through snowmelt and rainwater to a tributary to the Kinnickinnic River (Wilson Park Creek). The GMIA has implemented management measures over the last few years to reduce the amount of glycol reaching the storm sewers and the tributary draining over 2000 acres of airport lands. A monitoring effort with the U.S. Geological Survey is currently underway to document the changes in water quality in Wilson Park Creek as a result of glycol management practices in place at the airport.

Table 7. Kinnickinnic River Watershed at a Glance

<i>Watershed drainage area</i>	33 square miles
<i>Miles of streams</i>	25
<i>Miles of streams listed as outstanding or exceptional resource waters</i>	0
<i>Miles of streams or number of lakes/ponds on impaired waters list</i>	2.8, 1 park pond
<i>General threats to stream water quality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stream and wetland modification ■ Urban runoff ■ Industrial point sources ■ Contaminated sediments ■ Construction site erosion
<i>Number of lakes</i>	0 named lakes, 7 park ponds
<i>Number of dams/impoundments</i>	0
<i>Threats to lake water quality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exotic plant species in park ponds ■ Contaminated sediments in Jackson Park Pond
<i>Number of industrial wastewater treatment facilities</i>	7 specific
<i>Number of municipal wastewater treatment facilities</i>	All of watershed wastewater flows to MMSD

Figure 8. Kinnickinnic River Watershed

