

TECHNICAL BULLETIN

The recent heavy rains that took place from Wednesday September 29, 2010 through Friday October 1 once again showed how ill prepared we are for major catastrophes of this kind. We seem to be moving between two extremes where we either have too little rain or we have too much. Our refusal to prioritise a well planned and cohesive watershed management programme has brought us to a point where we cannot store enough water to withstand any prolonged dry period on one hand, while on the other, when we get rainfall the water is so muddy we cannot use it. So what we have is a situation where we have water lock offs not only when it doesn't rain, but also when it rains heavy.

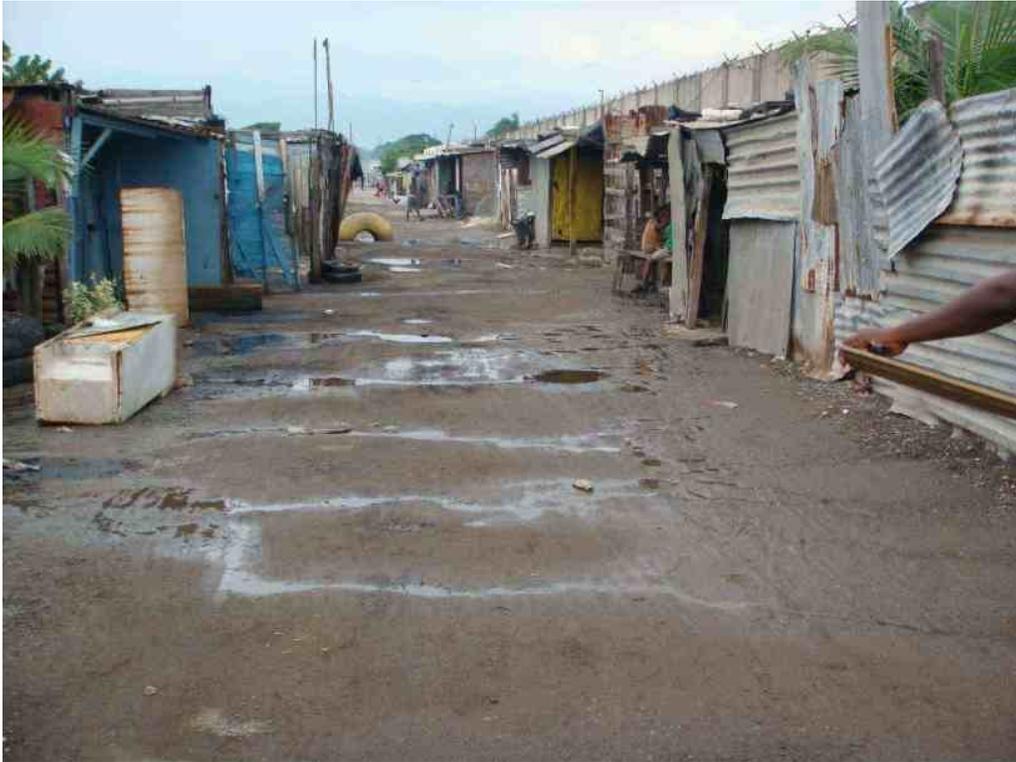
Been to Greenwich Fishing Beach recently? In addition to being buffeted by solid waste from gully wash out (Photo 01), another problem that has surfaced due to the recent heavy rains is ground water pollution on Greenwich Fishing beach which is in close proximity to the Petrojam refinery. A visit to the Greenwich Town Fishing Beach n Monday October 4 revealed what appeared to be up-wellings at several locations on the beach that were visibly contaminated with what appeared to be petroleum products.

Photo 1 – Greenwich Beach SW from Gully Wash Out



From a distance the beach might just appear to be wet (Photo 02a), but on closer

Photo 2a – Is it or isn't it



examination the water is heavily contaminated with what looked (Photo 02b) and smelled like petroleum.

Photo 02b – Looks like it



The contamination was not uniform. Some up-wellings seemed to be contaminated by light product (Photo 03) while at other points contamination was by heavier product

Photo 03 – Rainbow



(Photo 04a and 04b). The up-wellings formed rivulets (Photo 05a and 05b), which

Photo 4a – Heavier Product



Photo 4b – Heavier Product



Photo 5a – Rivulet



Photo 5b - Rivulet



flowed to the marine environment (Photo 06).

Photo 06 – Oil in the Marine Environment



While the fisher folk can do little to address the oil pollution, some residents think they have a good handle on cleaning up the solid waste, (Photo 07) while others seem

Photo 07 – The Fire Blazes with Debris Collected From the Beach



to have mixed feelings about the immediate future (Photo 08).

Photo 08 – Mixed Emotions



The observations suggest that there may be local ground water contamination by leakage from nearby storage tanks (Photo 09).

Photo 09 – A Section of the Tank Farm Forms the Back Drop



P. M. Carroll
TEMN
October 9, 2010