

## WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

### Residential

Recycle or properly dispose of household products that contain chemicals, such as insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, and used motor oil and other auto fluids. Don't pour them onto the ground or into storm drains.



### Lawn care:

Excess fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns and gardens wash off and pollute streams. In addition, yard clippings and leaves can wash into storm drains and contribute nutrients and organic matter to streams.

- Don't over water your lawn. Consider using a soaker hose instead of a sprinkler.
- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly. When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts. Use organic mulch or safer pest control methods whenever possible.
- Compost or mulch yard waste. Don't leave it in the street or sweep it into storm drains or streams.
- Cover piles of dirt or mulch being used in landscaping projects.

### Auto care:

Washing your car and degreasing auto parts at home can send detergents and other contaminants through the storm sewer system. Dumping automotive fluids into storm drains has the same result as dumping the materials directly into a water-body.

- Use a commercial car wash that treats or recycles its wastewater, or wash your car on your yard so the water infiltrates into the ground.
- Repair leaks and dispose of used auto fluids and batteries at designated drop-off or recycling locations.

### Residential landscaping:

- **Permeable Pavement**—Traditional concrete and asphalt don't allow water to soak into the ground. Instead these surfaces rely on storm drains to divert unwanted water. Permeable pavement systems allow rain and snowmelt to soak through, decreasing storm water runoff.
- **Rain Barrels**—You can collect rainwater from rooftops in mosquito-proof containers. The water can be used later on lawn or garden areas.
- **Rain Gardens and Grassy Swales** —Specially designed areas planted with native plants can provide natural places for rainwater to collect and soak into the ground. Rain from rooftop areas or paved areas can be diverted into these areas rather than into storm drains.
- **Vegetated Filter Strips**—Filter strips are areas of native grass or plants created along roadways or streams. They trap the pollutants storm water picks up as it flows across driveways and streets.



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### Commercial:

Dirt, oil, and debris that collect in parking lots and paved areas can be washed into the storm sewer system and eventually enter local water-bodies.

- Sweep up litter and debris from sidewalks, driveways and parking lots, especially around storm drains.
- Cover grease storage and dumpsters and keep them clean to avoid leaks.
- Report any chemical spill to the local hazardous waste cleanup team. They'll know the best way to keep spills from harming the environment.

### Construction:

Erosion controls that aren't maintained can cause excessive amounts of sediment and debris to be carried into the storm water system. Construction vehicles can leak fuel, oil, and other harmful fluids that can be picked up by storm water and deposited into local water bodies.

- Divert storm water away from disturbed or exposed areas of the construction site.
- Install silt fences, vehicle mud removal areas, vegetative cover, and other sediment and erosion controls and properly maintain them, especially after rainstorms.
- Prevent soil erosion by minimizing disturbed areas during construction projects, and seed and mulch bare areas as soon as possible.

### Automotive Facilities:

Uncovered fueling stations allow spills to be washed into storm drains. Cars waiting to be repaired can leak fuel, oil, and other harmful fluids that can be picked up by storm water.

- Clean up spills immediately and properly dispose of cleanup materials.
- Provide cover over fueling stations and design or retrofit facilities for spill containment.
- Properly maintain fleet vehicles to prevent oil, gas, and other discharges from being washed into local water bodies.
- Install and maintain oil/water separators.

### Agriculture:

Lack of vegetation on stream banks can lead to erosion. Overgrazed pastures can also contribute excessive amounts of sediment to local water bodies. Excess fertilizers and pesticides can poison aquatic animals and lead to destructive algae blooms. Livestock in streams can contaminate waterways with bacteria, making them unsafe for human contact.

- Keep livestock away from stream banks and provide them a water source away from water bodies.
- Store and apply manure away from water bodies and in accordance with a nutrient management plan.
- Vegetate riparian areas along waterways.
- Rotate animal grazing to prevent soil erosion in fields.
- Apply fertilizers and pesticides according to label instructions to save money and minimize pollution.



### Pet Waste:

When our pets leave those little surprises, rain washes all that pet waste and bacteria into the storm drains. And then pollutes our waterways. So what should you do? Dispose of it properly (preferably in the toilet). Then that little surprise gets treated like it should.