

What do you know about Stormwater Pollution?

Stormwater runoff occurs when precipitation flows over the ground. Impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, and streets prevent stormwater from naturally soaking into the ground. Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland, or coastal water. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the waterbodies we use for swimming, fishing, and providing drinking water.



In urban areas, much of the land surface is covered by buildings and pavement, which does not allow rain to soak into the ground. Instead, most developed areas rely on storm drains to carry large amounts of runoff from roofs and paved areas to nearby waterways.

Urbanization *increases* the variety and amount of pollutants carried into streams, rivers, and lakes.

The stormwater runoff carries pollutants such as oil, dirt, chemicals, and lawn fertilizer directly to streams and rivers, where they seriously harm water quality. Consequently, a typical city block generates more than 5 times more runoff than a woodland area of the same size.

Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals, and people...and can harm fish and wildlife populations, kill native vegetation, foul drinking water supplies,

and make recreational areas unsafe and unpleasant.

10 Things You Can Do to Prevent Stormwater Runoff Pollution

1. Use fertilizers sparingly and sweep up driveways, sidewalks, and roads.
2. Never dump anything down storm drains.
3. Vegetate bare spots in your yard.
4. Compost your yard waste.
5. Avoid pesticides; learn about Integrated Pest Management (IPM).
6. Direct downspouts away from paved surfaces.
7. Take your car to the car wash instead of washing it in the driveway.
8. Check car for leaks, and recycle motor oil.
9. Pick up after your pet.
10. If you have a septic tank, have it pumped and the system inspected regularly.

