

STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION AROUND THE HOME

As stormwater flows over driveways, lawns, and sidewalks, it picks up any chemicals, debris and other pollutants that have been previously deposited on these surfaces. Some people believe that discharges and stormwater runoff that enter into storm drains go to the wastewater treatment plant before being released into the environment. However, storm drainage systems and sanitary sewer systems are separate from each other. The fact is that anything that enters a storm drain is discharged back into the environment untreated and eventually it ends up in our local creeks, streams, and rivers that we use for recreation and as a source for drinking water.



Here are some things that you can do at home to help clean up our stormwater and improve the quality of our local waterways:

- Practice proper storage and disposal of household chemicals.
- Use pesticides and fertilizers cautiously and only in the recommended amounts.
- Pickup and dispose of pet waste properly.
- If you have a septic tank, have it inspected regularly and pumped out as necessary. Also, household chemicals that are discharged into the tank can destroy the biological process that usually takes place in the system.
- Use a commercial car-washing bay to wash your car.
- If you do wash your car at home, park on the lawn so that wash waters soak into the ground rather than discharge to a storm drain.
- Repair any leaks on your vehicle as soon as possible.
- Don't wash any leaked or spilled fluids off your driveway with water. Instead, use an absorbent material to soak up the leak or spill and dispose of the material properly.
- Compost or recycle yard waste when possible. Do not place or wash yard waste into storm drains.
- Do not clean paintbrushes outdoors or over a storm drain.
- Never dispose or discharge any chemicals, paints, waste or wash waters into a storm drain.
- If you have a swimming pool, drain it only when the chlorine content is non-detectable.

For more information and tips you can use around your home to help protect our local waterways, please visit www.epa.gov/owow/nps/dosdont.html