

Individual Action Checklist

What can I do...?

Pet and Human Waste

- Clean up after pets and other large animals to keep feces from polluting water. Carry and use a pooper scooper and plastic bag to dispose of waste in the trash.
- Keep animals out of lakes and streams.
- Inspect and pump septic systems regularly. Chemicals can damage septic systems, so select them carefully and use care in pouring or flushing them into septic systems.

Yard and Garden

- Landscape with fewer hard-paved surfaces to reduce volume of stormwater runoff.
- Prevent the erosion and runoff of soil by vegetating bare soil. When storing soil, do not store it on or near paved areas where it can easily be carried to storm drains.
- Landscape with vegetation (such as greenbelts, buffer zones or grass filter strips) between hard paved surfaces and storm drains and/or surface waters (e.g., lakes and streams). Design drainage systems to direct stormwater runoff into grassy or well-vegetated areas rather than paved surfaces.
- Minimize soil compaction by core aerating your yard.
- Manually operate sprinklers and use drip/trickle irrigation systems to water only as needed. Keep water off paved surfaces to avoid excessive runoff. If rain is expected, water another day.
- Replace high-maintenance lawns with drought-resistant grass strains and select native plants that require less water, fertilizer and pesticides.
- Raise lawn mower to its highest level. Grass requires less water when longer and shaded.
- Compost (or leave on your lawn) grass clippings and other lawn waste that will safely decompose. Do not dump such items in storm drains or ditches since they can clog drainage systems and add unwanted nutrients to runoff.
- Reduce pesticide use by planting pest-resistant plant species or those that attract beneficial insects for biological pest control.
- Store all fertilizers and pesticides in proper containers and keep dry.
- Use slow-release or natural fertilizers such as compost and bone meal.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for application of fertilizers and pesticides to avoid overuse and excessive runoff into storm drains. Sweep excess product from sidewalks and driveway back onto yard so it doesn't wash easily/directly down gutters.
- Never over-water after application of fertilizers and pesticides. If rain is expected, then apply chemicals another day.

Auto and Household Maintenance

- Store all automotive chemicals (such as antifreeze, oil, gas and grease) and household chemicals (such as cleaners, solvents, thinners and paints) in proper containers and keep dry.
- Do not pour these chemicals onto soil.
- To clean up accidental spills, use absorbents (such as kitty litter and sawdust) and then sweep. Don't rinse with water!
- Never use storm drains or gutters to dispose of chemical waste.
- Properly handle and dispose of such wastes by recycling or taking them to a treatment facility. Did you know that 60% of household hazardous wastes can be recycled?

- When washing your car consider: (1) using commercial car washes where wastewater is treated, (2) washing car over lawn, gravel or other permeable surface to reduce runoff, and (3) only using the hose for final rinse.
- Keep your vehicle well-maintained and repair any leaking systems immediately. Watch for drips!

Around Your Neighborhood

- Report any sources of stormwater pollution that are resulting in discharges into storm drains or surface waters (such as construction sites with unmanaged soil erosion, and businesses or individuals dumping materials into drains) to local government officials.
- Do not litter. Litter can be carried into local streams and lakes where it can negatively affect wildlife habitat and water quality.

Share your pollution prevention behaviors and practices with your family, friends, and neighbors.