

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that contaminants in stormwater runoff cause over half of the pollution in our nation's waterways.

Stormwater pollution begins when rain or snowmelt washes over pavement and other impervious surfaces, picks up contaminants, and flows down storm drains to the waterways we rely on for drinking and recreation.

Common pollutants include antifreeze, detergents, fertilizers, gasoline, household chemicals, motor oil, paints, pesticides, pet waste, road salt, solvents, and yard waste.

Help Keep Our Waterways Clean!

To learn more visit:

www.thinkbluemassachusetts.org/for-residents



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Adapted from materials provided by
Department of Environmental Protection and
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Storm Water Pollution Prevention Guide

For Homeowners

Stormwater Pollution is the toxic mix of bacteria, chemical, metals, nutrients and other contaminants that washes over pavement and other impervious surfaces and flows down storm drains to the waterways we rely on for drinking and recreation.

PICK-UP AFTER YOUR DOG

Dog waste carries high levels of harmful **E. coli bacteria** and other pathogens and is a major contributor to local water pollution.

- Pick up the poop! Always carry a **plastic bag** when you walk your dog and dispose of pet waste in a **trash can**.

LAWN & GARDEN

- Choose **organic lawn chemicals** whenever possible
Use lawn chemicals sparingly and never use more than the directions call for
- Sweep up **dry chemical spills** and dispose in trash.
- Don't pile **yard waste** near streams, wetlands, or storm drains.
- Start a **compost pile**.
- Don't allow irrigation to **spray onto pavement**. Water that ends up on the pavement contributes to polluted runoff and is wasted.
- Make sure that **your landscaper/ irrigation contractor** follows rules for preventing stormwater runoff.
- Redirect **downspouts** toward grassy areas, trees, and shrubs, so that runoff from your roof can soak in the ground.

- Use **pervious materials** in landscape designs. Bricks, pavers, and stones allow water to slowly filter into the ground.
- Set the **rain barrel** under your downspout to capture water for another use.
- Plant **rain gardens** to help filter and soak up water before it runs onto the street.

HOME / BUSINESS

- Use the **least toxic** products available for cleaning, etc.
- Avoid **liquid chemical spills** such as oil, gasoline, antifreeze, paint, etc. on paved areas.
*If liquid chemical spill occurs, clean with rags and absorbent material such as **sand or kitty litter**. Sweep up absorbents and dispose in the trash.*
- Never use a **hose** to wash down the driveway or sidewalk. This washes pollutants into storm drains and is a waste of water.
- Dispose of household hazardous waste through your local **DPW/ Household Hazardous Waste Program**.
- Never pour **wash water or chemicals** down storm drains.
- Store chemicals in **leak proof containers** inside a building or shed, or under cover way from rainwater.
- **Avoid oversalting** walkways and driveways in the winter and use non-toxic products whenever possible.
- Sweep up all **construction areas** on a regular basis and dispose of debris in the trash.

WASHING CARS AND BOATS

- Park your vehicle in a spot where the soap will run off onto **grass**, rather than into the street and down the storm drain. If practical, park your vehicle on your lawn when washing it.
- Use **organic or mild soaps** and detergents
- Never clean or pressure wash the **undercarriage of a car** at home. The oil, grease and other pollutants from this activity can contaminate shallow ground water.
- Always use a **hose nozzle with a trigger**, and shut it off when you're not using to conserve water
- Skip the home treatment and **wash your car professionally** but use a car wash that recycles water!

AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR

- Store automotive parts, such as batteries engines, transmissions and parts that may have oily or greasy residue on them, under cover and off the ground, **to minimize rainwater contact**. Rainwater can wash pollutants off these parts and into storm drains.
- Collect all used oil, antifreeze, and other vehicle fluids in containers with tight fitting lids and **recycle at a local service station**.

SWIMMING POOLS AND HOT TUBS

- Never **discharge pool water** directly into a storm drain.
- Dechlorinated pool, hot tub, or spa water with **neutralizing chemicals**, if water is to be discharged into the ground. If water cannot be dechlorinated, it must be collected by a pool maintenance company.