

Pollution is washed by rain into storm drains, then directly into our drinking water supplies and the oceans and lakes we play in. Fertilizer, oil, pet waste, grass clippings, you name it, it ends up in our water. Stormwater pollution is one of the greatest threats to clean and plentiful water in New Jersey.

**Small easy changes to everyday habits add up to cleaner water.**

## Easy Things You Can Do to Prevent Stormwater Pollution



### 1. Never dump anything down storm drains (or in ditches).

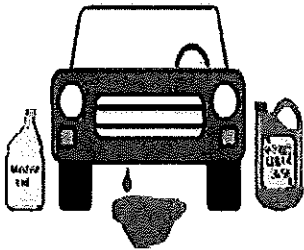
- Many people wrongly think that storm drains are part of a sewer system that flow to a wastewater treatment plant. Actually, storm drains are a direct link to local streams, rivers, lakes and wetlands.
- Do not let sewage, waste or hazard products flow into stormwater drains.

### 2. Pick up after your pet – It's the law!

- Pet waste that is left on streets, sidewalks, yards, or trails near streams is not only illegal, it can easily wash into area water sources and it can add harmful bacteria to our water than can make the water unsafe to swim or play in.
- Always pick up after your pets. Use newspapers, bags or pooper scoopers to pick up waste and dispose of in a trash can or flush it unwrapped down the toilet!
- Never discard pet waste in a storm drain.



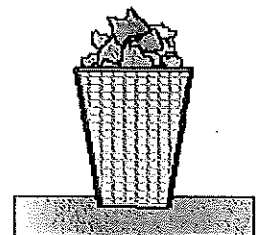
### 3. Check your car for leaking fluids and recycle your motor oil



- Improper disposal of used oil, which includes oil leaking from cars, contributes significantly to stormwater pollution. The EPA estimates that American households improperly dump about 193 million gallons of used oil every year, or roughly the equivalent of 17 Exxon Valdez oil spills.
- If you have an oil leak, do your part and have it repaired.
- If you change your own automotive fluids, recycle your used motor oil and antifreeze. SCMUA has collection units for oil and antifreeze. You can recycle up to 5 gallons per Customer, per day.

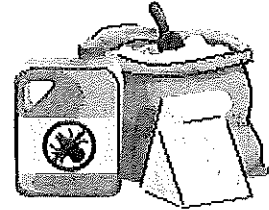
### 4. Don't litter!

- Pick up trash you see on the ground (even if it is not yours) and place in trash receptacles.
- Recycle, Recycle, Recycle!
- Participate in community cleanups and creek or watershed clean-up!
- No one likes to see trash floating in the water and that is where it will end up if litter is left on the ground. Litter washes into area creeks and streams through storm drains where water from our streets goes untreated.
- Litter can also be dangerous to wildlife that might mistake it for food or get tangled in the trash.



## 5. Properly dispose of Hazardous Products

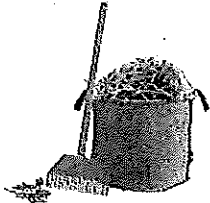
- Hazardous products include some household or commercial cleaning products, lawn and garden care products, motor oil, antifreeze, and paints. Do not pour them down storm drains.
- Read your product labels and dispose of properly.
- The SCMUA conducts two household hazardous waste events annually, usually in the spring and fall. This program is available to Sussex County residents free of charge. These events remove pollutants and toxins from the waste stream. For more information go to [www.scmua.org](http://www.scmua.org).
- Use natural or less toxic alternatives whenever possible.



## 6. Limit use of fertilizers and pesticides.

- Before you start - Do a soil test to see if you need fertilizer.
- Follow instructions on product labels for correct application.
- Do not apply if heavy rain is predicted.
- Clean up any product scattered onto driveways or sidewalks; it can be carried by rain runoff causing high levels of nutrients in our waters. Too many nutrients can lead to unnatural algae growth that depletes oxygen for aquatic ecosystems.
- Maintain a small lawn and keep the rest of your property or yard in a natural state with trees and other native vegetation that require little or no fertilizer.
- Properly dispose of any unused products.
- Look into alternatives that are healthier for you, your plants and the water supply.

## 7. Clean Up Leaves and Grass.



- Most people don't think of grass clippings and leaves as possible pollutants but they are when they end up in waterways through our storm drain system. These materials can uncontrolled growth of algae and aquatic weeds in the waterways.
- Mulch leaves by running the lawnmower over them and leaving the shredded leaves and grass in the lawn. This also adds needed nutrients back to your lawn minimizing the need of added fertilizers.
- Or consider making a compost bin or pile.
- Be sure to sweep up any leaves and grass from roads, driveways and sidewalks so they don't end up down the storm drain.

## 8. Wash your car at a commercial car wash that is plumbed to a treatment plant instead of washing your car on a driveway or street

- When you wash your car on the driveway or street the dirt, grease, and soap can wash into storm drains then directly into creeks and streams.
- Concentrations of detergents in streams can kill fish and the phosphates from soap can also cause excess algae to grow in our waterways. Excessive algae growth makes water cloudy, green, unattractive, smelly, and unpleasant for swimming, boating, fishing, or drinking.
- Take your car to the car wash where the rinse water goes to a wastewater treatment plant instead of storm drains. Most newer car washes in NWA are piped to treatment plants.
- If you do wash your car at home, do it on grassy or gravel areas that can absorb the water without it washing into the street, using products that are natural or less toxic.



# KEEP OUR WATER CLEAN!

For more solutions go to : [www.cleanwaternj.org](http://www.cleanwaternj.org)