

Solutions to Stormwater Pollution

A Guide to Healthy Habits for Cleaner Water

Pollution on streets, parking lots and lawns is washed by rain into storm drains, then directly to our drinking water supplies and the ocean and lakes our children play in. Fertilizer, oil, pesticides, detergents, pet waste, grass clippings: you name it and it ends up in our water.

Stormwater pollution is one of New Jersey's greatest threats to clean and plentiful water, and that's why we're all doing something about it.

By sharing the responsibility and making small, easy

changes in our daily lives, we can keep common pollutants out of stormwater. It all adds up to cleaner water, and it saves the high cost of cleaning up once it's dirty.

As part of New Jersey's initiative to keep our water clean and plentiful and to meet federal requirements, many municipalities and other public agencies, including colleges and military bases, must adopt ordinances or other rules prohibiting various activities that contribute to stormwater pollution. Breaking these rules can result in fines or other penalties.

EASY THINGS TO DO TO PROTECT OUR WATER

Limit your use of fertilizers and pesticides

- Do a soil test to see if you need fertilizer
- Do not apply fertilizer if heavy rain is predicted
- Look into alternatives for pesticides
- Maintain a small lawn and keep the rest of your property in a natural state with trees and vegetation that require little or no fertilizer.
- If you use fertilizers and pesticides, follow the instructions on the label on how to correctly apply it.

Properly use and 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 any hazardous products down a storm drain because storm drains are usually connected to local waterbodies and the water is not treated.

Keep pollution out of storm drains

- Do not let sewage or other wastes flow into a stormwater system.

Clean up after your pet

- Never discard pet waste into a storm drain. (See article below).

Don't feed wildlife

- Do not feed wildlife, such as ducks and geese, in public areas.
- Many municipalities and other public agencies must enact and enforce a rule that prohibits wildlife feeding in these areas.

Don't litter

- Place litter in trash receptacles.
- Recycle, recycle, recycle.
- Participate in community clean-ups.

Dispose of yard waste properly

- Keep leaves and grass out of storm drains.
- If your municipality or agency has yard waste collection rules, follow them.
- Use leaves and grass clippings as a resource for compost.
- Use a mulching mower that recycles grass clippings into the lawn.

Pet Waste: What You Can Do To Help Protect Our Water

As we all know, clean and plentiful water is important to our families, our environment, our economy and our quality of life. But, did you know that animal waste from pets can pollute our waters? When left on the ground, pet waste is washed by rain and melting snow and ice into storm drains that carry it to our rivers, lakes, the ocean and drinking water. Animal waste contains a high concentration of nutrients, as well as bacteria and disease-causing microorganisms that can cause problems.

What You Can Do

Pet owners or anyone who takes their pet for walks must properly dispose of the waste by picking it up, wrapping it and either placing it in the trash or flushing it unwrapped down the toilet.

Your municipality is required to adopt and enforce local pet-waste laws. At a minimum, your community must require that pet owners or their keepers immediately and properly dispose of their pet's solid waste deposited on any public or private property not owned or possessed by that person. People with assistance animals such as Seeing Eye dogs are exempt.

Make sure you know what your municipality requires – and follow it. Thank you for doing your part to keep New Jersey's waters clean.

For more information, please contact the following:

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Water Quality, Bureau of Nonpoint Pollution Control, Municipal Stormwater Regulation Program at (609) 633-7021, or visit www.njstormwater.org or www.nonpointsource.org Additional information is also available at U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Web sites www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater and www.epa.gov/nps.

