

# Preventing Stormwater Pollution at Home



## WHAT IS STORMWATER RUNOFF?

When it rains, water can either soak into the ground in grass and landscaped areas or run off impervious surfaces such as our streets, parking lots, sidewalks and roofs. Stormwater runoff is the water that flows over ground surface areas picking up any pollutants in its path as the runoff flows into our stormwater drainage system. Since the stormwater drainage system is not treated these pollutants are discharged directly into the nearest creek, stream, river or lake. Common pollutants in our watershed include sediment, fertilizer, pet waste, yard waste, auto fluids and litter.



## WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF STORMWATER POLLUTION?

- ◆ Sediment, or loose soil, clouds waterways making it difficult for sunlight to reach aquatic plants, impairs fish vision and can smother aquatic habitats.
- ◆ Excessive nutrients from fertilizers, pet waste, agricultural waste and yard waste can cause algae or vegetation blooms. When all of the algae and plants die, their decomposition uses up lots of dissolved oxygen depriving fish and other wildlife.
- ◆ Pet waste can also contain a variety of bacteria and pathogens that are harmful to human health and wildlife.
- ◆ Litter such as bottles, cans, plastic bags, take-out containers and cigarette butts that wash into waterways can trap, injure, suffocate or kill the creatures that reside there.
- ◆ Household hazardous wastes such as paint, cleaners, insecticides, herbicides, motor oil and antifreeze can poison creatures living in the water. People and other animals can become sick or die from eating diseased fish or ingesting polluted water.
- ◆ Polluted stormwater affects drinking water sources which affects human health and **increases drinking water treatment costs.**



Report stormwater concerns to our hotline at 704-282-4515

For more information visit the Stormwater website at [www.monroenc.org/stormwater](http://www.monroenc.org/stormwater)



# CLEAN WATER STARTS WITH YOU!

## Car Care

- ♦ Repair leaks and properly dispose of used auto fluids (antifreeze, oil, etc.).
- ♦ Use a commercial car wash or wash your car on a pervious surface such as grass or gravel that can filter the water. Buy biodegradable soaps that are chlorine and phosphate-free.



## Lawn Care

- ♦ Limit the amount of impervious surface on your property and vegetate bare spots in your yard.
- ♦ Direct downspouts away from hard surfaces to vegetated areas so runoff from the roof can soak into the ground.
- ♦ Consider installing a rain garden to allow water more time to soak into the ground.
- ♦ Pick up your pet's waste and dispose of it in the trash.
- ♦ Mow high and mulch your grass clippings back onto your lawn.
- ♦ Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly and always follow the directions for proper application.
- ♦ Do not dump anything into the stormwater drainage system.



**Visit the Stormwater Services Public Involvement website for more information about the following volunteer programs!**

- ♦ Adopt-A-Stream
- ♦ Storm Drain Marking
- ♦ Water Quality Monitoring



## Household

- ♦ Properly dispose of unused cleaners, paint, pesticides, fertilizers, pool chemicals and other household hazardous wastes (HHW). Never pour them into storm drains. Check the label of such materials before you pour them down an indoor drain to see if they need to be brought to a HHW collection site. Do not put liquids in the trash.
- ♦ Reduce your use of household hazardous wastes by searching for alternative cleaners, fertilizers and ways to manage pests.
- ♦ Don't dump your mop bucket outside, pour it down an indoor drain so the water is treated at the wastewater treatment plant before being released into the environment.
- ♦ Clean paint brushes and supplies inside for the same reason.
- ♦ Securely bag all of your garbage and make sure your trash and recycling cart lids are closed when you put them at the curb for collection. If you need another cart, call our Solid Waste Department at 704-282-4565.



## WHAT MAKES UP THE STORM DRAINAGE SYSTEM?

- ♦ Catch basins
- ♦ Drop inlets
- ♦ Curb inlets
- ♦ Drainage ditches
- ♦ Head walls
- ♦ Pipes
- ♦ Outfalls

