

## Landscaping & Gardening

- ⊗ *Do not over apply pesticides and fertilizers. Judiciously follow directions. Pulling weeds when possible is also an effective manner. Get a soil test from your yard to determine what and how much fertilizer is needed.*
- ⊗ *Minimize the need for pesticides by choosing plant species that are resistant to insects and disease. Landscaping with native plant species works best. Provide habitats for birds, bats, toads, etc. that prey on insect pests.*
- ⊗ *Do not over water the lawn or garden. Over watering may increase leaching of fertilizers to ground and surface water.*
- ⊗ *When your lawn or garden needs watering, use slow-watering techniques such as trickle irrigation or soaker hoses. These devices reduce runoff.*
- ⊗ *When you mow, set the blades to cut the grass two or three inches high. Most grasses are healthiest at this height and it controls weeds. Mow often and leave clippings on the ground to keep moisture in and provide nutrients to the soil as they decompose.*

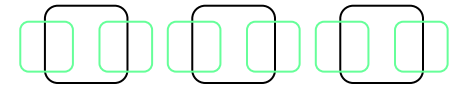


- ⊗ Compost your leaves, grass clippings and garden waste. Composting is easy and can be very inexpensive as non-sophisticated equipment is necessary. For more information, see Mid-America Regional Councils *How to Compost at Home* at: [http://www.marc.org/Environment/compost\\_home.htm](http://www.marc.org/Environment/compost_home.htm)
- ⊗ Control soil erosion on your property by planting ground cover and stabilizing areas that are prone to erosion.



- 🗑️ Save unused paint materials for a local household hazardous waste collection event, or reuse leftover paints when possible. Also, many school, church, theatre performance groups will take unused and leftover paint.
- 🗑️ Do not allow liquid paint products and wastes to drain into the storm drains, gutters, or streets.
- 🗑️ Choose water based paints (such as latex) instead of oil-based paints.

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## Storm Water Pollution Prevention for the Home



Be a Part of the  
Solution to Storm  
Water Pollution!

## ***What is Storm Water Runoff?***

*In open fields, forests, and wetlands, rain is usually absorbed by the soil or taken up by grasses, plants, and trees. In urban areas, however, rain or snow that falls on impenetrable surfaces such as roofs, parking lots, streets and lawns isn't absorbed.*

*Stormwater carries nutrient laden sediment, heavy metals, oils, and other materials which have accumulated on the land between rain events and flushes them into streams, rivers, and lakes and pollutes the water.*

## ***Why is Storm Water Pollution an Issue?***

*As storm water travels over the land, it picks up numerous sediments and chemicals that are not naturally found in our waterways. Some of these are poisonous, even in small traces. Nutrients are not poisonous but when an overabundance of nutrients are forced upon a natural system, the system can't cope. They can cause toxic algae blooms and other pollution problems in our waterways.*



## ***Storm Water Pollution Prevention Tips-***

- ✓ *Never allow any chemicals, yard wastes or any other materials to be washed down or put into storm drains. Storm drains carry untreated runoff directly into streams and lakes.*



- ✓ *Allow drainage from the roof to flow over your lawn instead. Never allow roof gutters to drain directly to the street or storm sewer*
- ✓ *Use a garbage can for trash and recycle reusable materials. Improperly discarded trash may be carried by runoff into the storm sewer.*
- ✓ *If you must buy items that are potentially hazardous, be sure to buy only as much as is needed, and follow the instruction on the label for proper use, storage and disposal.*

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## ***Auto Maintenance:***

- ⚠ *Wash your car only when necessary; use a bucket to save water. Wash your car on a grassy area so the ground can filter the water. Alternatively, go to a commercial car wash that uses water efficiently and disposes of runoff properly.*
- ⚠ *Clean up spilled brake fluid, oil, grease and antifreeze with kitty litter or other absorbent material. Do not use a garden hose to wash away chemicals where they can eventually reach local water sources.*
- ⚠ *If you cannot have your car's oil or antifreeze changed at a commercial facility, be sure to carefully collect all the used oil or antifreeze in a proper container with a tight-fitting cap, and deliver it to a service or recycling center with the oil filter.*
- ⚠ *Automobile fluids from leaks or maintenance changes are another source of water pollution. Each year Americans dump enough used oil into landfills to equal approximately 13 spills the size of the Exxon Valdez spill in Prince William Sound! Even more oil is disposed of illegally. Much of the oil eventually finds its way into our water. Never put used oil or other chemicals down storm drains or in drainage ditches. One quart of oil can contaminate up to two million gallons of drinking water.*

