



CLEAN WATER IS HAPPY WATER!



ONE PINT OF OIL IS ENOUGH TO CAUSE A SLICK ABOUT THE SIZE OF TWO FOOTBALL FIELDS ON CALM WATER!

What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is precipitation that flows from roads, roofs, and other impervious areas. This water, and all it carries, is discharged through piped systems or ditches into local streams and waterways.

Most storm drains go directly to our local streams, not to a wastewater treatment plant. Many pollutants are carried into storm drains by stormwater runoff. Storm drain stencils and marker medallions serve as a reminder to keep pollutants away from storm drains.

However, toxins in our waters are the result of people dumping pollutants directly into storm drains and drainage ditches.

Many things can pollute storm water, among them: Lawn clippings, leaves, pet waste, pesticides, fertilizers, paint, used motor oil, runoff from car-washing, and even household cleaners.

POLLUTION JUST *ISN'T* PRETTY!

Sediment carried by drainage systems to our streams and rivers blocks light from reaching aquatic plants, disabling the plants' ability to perform photosynthesis. Sediment also darkens the water, increasing its temperature adding stress to aquatic plant and animal life.

When organic matter and green debris decay in water, they use oxygen in the process, depriving aquatic plants and animals of oxygen they need to live. Litter of all types clogs waterways and breaks down into toxics that poison aquatic life and decreases circulation of nutrients.

Removal of trees and shrubs around waterways leads to higher water temperatures and deadly conditions plants and animals that call our waters home.



**Benton
County**
OREGON

HOW DOES THAT AFFECT ME?

Infectious diseases can be spread by bacteria in water - each year 7 million Americans are sickened by contaminated water. AND, this is only partly due to drinking water; polluted recreational water is also a problem.

Over the years, chemicals have gotten into waterways. These chemicals have negative affects on aquatic life, poison those who eat poisoned fish, and can lead to liver damage, nervous system damage, and even cancer.

Everyone can play a part

in reducing stormwater pollution and in helping to keep Oregon beautiful! Even the smallest actions can add up to something amazing. Please be mindful of your habits and be sure they are not polluting the water and our environment!

HOW TO HELP

In the Garden -----

DO

- ✓ Sweep roadways and gutters regularly and place the sweepings on the garden, compost pile or bin.
- ✓ Prevent soil and/or mulch from being washed or blown off the garden.
- ✓ Rake up leaves and lawn clippings and place them on the garden or in the compost pile/bin.
- ✓ Mulch or re-plant areas of disturbed soil.
- ✓ Use natural alternatives to pest control.

DON'T

- ⊗ Hose off hard surfaces into gutters.
- ⊗ Hose leaves or grass clippings into gutters.
- ⊗ Pile soil or sand where it can be washed into the stormwater system.
- ⊗ Overuse chemicals (pesticides and herbicides) that could be washed into the system from the yard or garden.
- ⊗ Use too much fertilizer.

In the Street -----

DO

- ✓ Pick up litter in the park and on the street.
- ✓ Clean up pet droppings and dispose of them in the garbage or toilet.

DON'T

- ⊗ Drop packaging or cigarette butts on the ground.
- ⊗ Leave waste on the ground, even if close by bins are full.

With the Car -----

DO

- ✓ Maintain the car, keeping it leak free and tuned to burn fuel 'cleanly.'
- ✓ Use the minimum amount of detergent, wash on the grass or gravel, or go through a car wash where the water will be recycled.

DON'T

- ⊗ Work on your car (including oil changing!) in a place where oil or grease may get washed into storm drains.
- ⊗ Wash the car in the street using detergent.

When Renovating -----

DO

- ✓ Wash brushes and rollers over sand filters on the lawn.
- ✓ Keep paint, tarps, and solvents clear of gutters or drains.
- ✓ Reuse tarps after paint has settled.
- ✓ Allow unused paint to dry out and then put it in the waste bin.

DON'T

- ⊗ Wash out cement mixers or wheelbarrows so the waste flows into the street drain.
- ⊗ Hose sand, gravel, or cement into the gutters or drains.
- ⊗ Leave piles of sand or gravel uncovered where it could wash or blow into the gutters or drains.

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For more info. visit:

www.co.benton.or.us

www.ci.philomath.or.us

www.epa.gov/npdes

www.oregon.gov/deq/wq

