



Stormwater Runoff

What Is Stormwater Runoff?

Stormwater runoff occurs after a rainfall. Stormwater flows over impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, streets, parking lots and roofs and is unable to percolate into the ground.

Why Is Stormwater Runoff a Problem?

Stormwater runoff can collect many different types of pollution before it reaches water. The stormwater collects pollutants and flows into a body of water like a stream or lake. That same water may also be used for swimming, fishing and even providing some of us with drinking water!

How Do Different Types of Pollution Affect My Watershed?

There are two basic types of pollution: point source and non-point source. Point source pollution is easy to understand because it can be traced directly to its source. Point source pollution was a big concern in the past, but stricter laws and regulations have greatly decreased the problem.

Non-point source pollution means that the pollution cannot be traced back to a specific source, but instead comes from many different sources throughout the environment. Stormwater runoff pollution is a type of non-point source pollution. Non-point source pollution is the primary cause of watershed pollution today. Non-point source pollution occurs when small amounts of pollution from a large variety of sources is picked up by stormwater runoff and carried into water bodies.

Stormwater runoff can carry many different types of non-point source pollution. Each can affect your watershed in a different way. Excess nutrients from fertilizer or manure carried in stormwater runoff can negatively affect our water supply. Pathogenic bacteria and other microorganisms can be carried by stormwater into a water body. This creates health hazards and can cause lakes and beaches to close. Other hazardous wastes can be carried into a water body. These include insecticides, paint, motor oil, and heavy metals.

All of these items can cause illness not only to aquatic life, but also humans.

Here are some tips to help you on your way to a pollution solution:

- Never Dump Anything Down a Storm Drain
- Use Fertilizers and Pesticides Sparingly
- Properly Dispose of Hazardous Household Chemicals
- Direct Downspouts Away From Paved Surfaces
- Check Car for Leaks and Recycle Motor Oil
- Properly Dispose of Pet Waste
- Inspect and Pump Septic Tank Regularly

For questions or additional information, please contact:

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