

What can we do to reduce the adverse impacts of stormwater on our property?

Around the House

Divert stormwater away from driveways and roads. Instead, consider installing a rain garden.

Rain gardens are specially designed areas for rainwater to collect and soak into the ground.

Rain from rooftop areas or paved areas can be diverted into these areas rather than into storm drains.

Recycle or properly dispose of household products that contain chemicals, such as insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, and used motor oil and other auto fluids. Don't pour them down the drain or into storm drains. You can bring your old oil-based paint, motor oil, antifreeze, and other household hazardous waste to any County Solid Waste facility. There is no charge for household hazardous wastes.



Lawn care

Excess fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns and gardens wash off during storms and pollute streams. In addition, yard clippings and leaves can wash into storm drains and contribute nutrients and organic matter to streams, causing algae blooms.



Don't overwater your lawn. Apply about 1 inch of water per week, including rainfall during summer, less in cooler weather. Split into two waterings per week for sandy soils.

Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly. When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts.

Use organic mulch or safer pest control methods whenever possible. Compost or mulch yard waste. Don't leave it in the street or sweep it into storm drains or streams.

Auto care

Washing your car and degreasing auto parts at home can send detergents and other contaminants through the storm sewer system. Dumping automotive fluids into storm drains has the same result as dumping the materials directly into a waterbody. Use a commercial car wash that treats or recycles its wastewater, or wash your car on your lawn so the water soaks into the ground. Repair leaks and dispose of used auto fluids and batteries at designated drop-off or recycling locations.



On the Farm

Excess fertilizers and pesticides can poison aquatic animals and lead to destructive algae blooms. Allowing livestock in streams can contaminate waterways with bacteria, making them unsafe for human contact. Overgrazed pastures can contribute excessive amounts of sediment to local waterbodies. Keep livestock away from streambanks and provide them a water source away from waterbodies. Store and apply manure away from waterbodies and in accordance with a nutrient management plan. Maintain riparian areas along waterways. Rotate animal grazing to prevent soil erosion in fields. Apply fertilizers and pesticides according to label instructions to save money and minimize pollution.

Septic systems

Poorly maintained septic systems can release nutrients and pathogens (bacteria and viruses) that can be picked up by stormwater and discharged into nearby waterbodies. Pathogens can cause public health problems and environmental concerns. Inspect your system every 3 years and pump your tank as necessary (every 3 to 5 years). Don't dispose of household hazardous waste in sinks or toilets.

