

A Drain is a Drain, Right?

Not really. Not all drains do the same thing. The water that drains down the sink or toilet in a home flows to the sanitary sewer and associated wastewater treatment plant or individual septic disposal system for treatment.

A stormwater drain system, on the other hand, is designated to carry rainwater from streets and driveways to prevent flooding. They do not have any treatment and flow directly into streams, lakes, and rivers which we drink from. As the rain flows over parking lots, driveways, and other surfaces it picks up debris and pollutants depositing them into our lakes, rivers, and streams. Some of this stormwater discharges into ponds in your backyards. These stormwater ponds filter the water absorbing harmful chemicals and allow sediments to settle there. Armed with the knowledge in this brochure, YOU can help in the fight for clean water!



Looking for more Information?

Report Illegal Dumping, Discharges, Spills or
other Environmental Emergencies:

NYS-DEC Tip line 1-800-847-7332

Chemical & Oil Spills 1-800-457-7362

For more information, visit:

Soil and Water Conservation Districts:

www.nys-soilandwater.org/contacts/county_offices.html

New York State-DEC:

www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8468.html

Environmental Protection Agency:

http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=6

Center for Watershed Protection

<http://www.cwp.org/>



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Employees' Association, Inc.

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Make Your Home the Solution to Stormwater Pollution



"Providing Today, Protecting Tomorrow"

Stormwater is the flow of water that immediately results after it rains and is the greatest threat to clean water.

Stormwater- from our Streets to our Streams

When it rains, stormwater flows over driveways, lawns, sidewalks, and parking lots on its way to the nearest entrance into the storm sewer system. Unfortunately, the stormwater picks up soil, chemicals, and other pollutants. These pollutants are why the Environmental Protection Agency declares that polluted stormwater runoff is the nation's greatest threat to clean water.



How does that involve you?

By practicing healthy household habits YOU can prevent pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, pet wastes, detergents, automotive fluids, and grass clippings, and other pollutants from entering the waterways of New York.



Eight, Easy, Examples!

Landscaping

Water your plants early in the morning to avoid evaporation. Aim your sprinklers so that they only water your lawns and don't cause runoff onto paved areas. Minimize pesticide, herbicide, and fertilizer use. Only use what is recommended on the label. Avoid applications if the forecast calls for rain.



Outdoor Storage

Store all potential pollutants indoors or under a covered area secured with a tarp. Clean up all spills immediately. Use dry absorbents as necessary. Keep lids on all storage containers. Label all storage containers. Regularly sweep and clean out all outdoor storage areas removing dirt and debris.

Waste Management

Keep the area outside where garbage goes clean and free of litter. Close the lids on the dumpsters and trash cans. Do not use the dumpster for the disposal of liquids. Remember to clean up after your pets. These harmful bacteria & nutrients can cause harmful algal blooms.



General Cleaning

Minimize the use of powerful chemical agents. Switch to environmentally friendly cleaning products. Dispose of waste water in a sanitary sewer not the storm drains.

Vehicle maintenance

Perform all vehicle maintenance indoors if possible. If not, use a drop cloth or tarp to contain liquids. Use drip proof pans to collect leaking fluids. Clean up spills with kitty litter or sand and dispose of them properly.



Vehicle Washing

Wash vehicles at a commercial car wash when possible. The waste water filled with soapy suds drains right to the sanitary sewer. When you wash your car in the driveway it runs right down into the storm sewer. If you must wash your car at your house, wash your car on your lawn. Your lawn will absorb the soapy water. Also, try to use biodegradable soaps.

House

Direct your gutters and downspouts to a vegetated area. It will absorb the water instead of creating stormwater runoff. Regularly sweep and collect debris around your house, do not hose down sidewalks or parking lots. Never dump anything down the stormwater drain.

Construction

If you are building a home be sure to use good erosion control practices. A silt fence around the perimeter of your yard will capture any sediment being washed away during a rain event. Store materials where they are not exposed to rain and use a tarp if able. Seed and mulch soils that are not actively being worked.

