



HOMEOWNERS GUIDE TO RUNOFF POLLUTION PREVENTION

Homeowners may not realize the impact their everyday household chores have on the environment. Simple housekeeping tasks such as fertilizing the lawn and washing the car can be harmful to the environment. But the good news is that by being mindful while doing certain activities your impact on the environment can be minimal.

- Washing the car at home may be easy, but if the suds from the wash are allowed to flow into the street and then the storm drain then all of the detergents, dirt and oil from the car wash end up in the closest body of water. Take your car to a commercial car wash, where the water from the wash is directed to a sanitary sewer system, but if you must wash your car at home wash it on the grass, which eliminates runoff and waters your lawn at the same time.
- Walking your dog is good for the health of your dog and for you too, but leaving your pet's waste on the ground is bad for the environment and the health of humans and wildlife. Pet waste contains harmful bacteria and viruses like E.coli, salmonella and giardia. When it rains the bacteria and viruses from the pet waste are washed down the storm drain to the nearest waterway where it could come in contact with humans. So play it safe and pick up after your pet and throw away the waste or better yet flush it down a toilet where the waste is treated properly.
- Everyone wants a beautiful lawn, but sometimes that lush green lawn comes at the expense to the environment. Misuse of fertilizers and pesticides, such as applying before rain storms or over flow onto hard surfaces, can cause the fertilizer/pesticide to be washed into the storm drain. In waterways fertilizers can cause algae blooms that block out sunlight and compete with native water plants. When the algae die, the decomposition process robs the water of oxygen, which can kill fish and other aquatic life.
 - Test your soil before adding fertilizer.
 - Don't apply fertilizers or pesticides before rainstorms.

- If fertilizers or pesticides do get only hard surfaces sweep up the excess and dispose of properly, never wash away with a hose.
 - Limit your use of fertilizers by not raking up grass clippings after mowing. As the clippings break down they serve as a natural fertilizer.
 - Always follow the directions on the package.
- Many everyday household chemicals can pose a serious threat to the environment. Items such as glass cleaners, paint thinner, antifreeze, bleach, oils, battery acids and cleaners are hazardous to the environment if washed or poured into the storm drain.
- Don't dump household hazardous wastes in the storm drain where they will end up in the nearest waterbody.
 - Avoid washing chemicals off of the driveway into the street with a hose.
 - Always follow the directions on the label for usage and storage of household chemicals.
 - Remember, some household hazardous wastes such as old batteries, motor oil and ink cartridges are collected by the Lexington County Solid Waste Department.

For more information on how you can help or to request a presentation for your local homeowners association contact:

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