

Common Stormwater Pollutants

Sediment: Soil, clay, sand and gravel washed from ditches, lawns and driveways. Sediment reduces water clarity, mucks up our streams and lakes, smothers habitat and carries attached pollutants to waterways.

Nutrients and Organic Matter: Animal, yard and garden waste, soil, and products such as fertilizer contain nitrogen and phosphorus, which contribute to nuisance algae growth in rivers and lakes. Decomposing organic matter consumes oxygen, which can harm aquatic organisms.

Pathogens: Disease causing organisms found in human, pet and other animal waste.

Chemicals: Herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers from lawns and gardens, detergents from washing our cars, heavy metals and petroleum by-products. These toxic substances are harmful to aquatic, terrestrial and human life. Some stay in the environment and cause damage for many years.

Chlorides: Road salt. Concentrations from winter months can be very high in stormwater runoff, which can be toxic to aquatic life.

Thermal impacts: Roads, roofs, and sidewalks can increase the temperature of stormwater as it runs off surfaces. Removing shoreline vegetation also warms streams, lakes and wetlands, stressing fish and invertebrates that are adapted to colder temperatures.

Litter: Trash and debris often end up in streams and lakes, diminishing their natural beauty, degrading habitat and harming fish and wildlife.

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Stormwater is not just rain!

Ever notice how fresh and clean everything looks after a good rain?

All the dirt, grease, and trash from roads and parking lots are washed away into the storm drain system, which often flows directly into our rivers and lakes.

It is a problem, and its name is:

Stormwater Pollution

