

STORMWATER

WHAT IS IT? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?



Stormwater is precipitation (from either a rain event or snow melt) that falls on impervious surfaces, like streets or the roof of our house, and flows over them to storm drains that eventually lead to lakes and rivers.

Water flowing over hard surfaces cannot infiltrate, therefore it moves faster causing more damage and picks up pollutants along the way. Common pollutants include yard waste, motor oil, leaf litter, trash, and salt used during the winter. Runoff containing these pollutants and flowing into storm drains is NOT treated before entering our local water bodies such as Detroit Lake, Pelican River, Long Lake, and Lake St. Claire.

Keeping water on the land and intercepting it before it hits impervious surfaces helps to infiltrate it back to the earth. Pollutants can be absorbed and filtered out by plants and groundwater can be recharged.

Everyday Ways to Reduce Pollutants in Stormwater Runoff

- **Pick up after pets. Pet waste contains bacteria, nitrogen, and phosphorus.**
- **Keep grass clippings and leaves off the street and away from storm drains.**
- **Clean up spilled fertilizer, oil, and other household chemicals. They should be disposed of properly at your local Hazardous Waste collection facility. They should NOT be poured down a storm drain, into the ditch, or on the ground.**
- **Wash your vehicle on the lawn. Soaps and detergents can contain phosphorus and other nutrients which will benefit your lawn but negatively impact the quality of our nearby waters.**
- **Maintain your vehicle to be sure there aren't any leaks.**
- **Install a rain barrel to harvest rain for reuse on your lawn or garden.**
- **Plant a tree or install a rain garden. Both have deep roots systems that will filter out pollutants and absorb more water than the grass in your lawn can alone.**



GET INVOLVED!

Install a Rain Garden

The cost of installing a garden yourself is typically around \$300.



Install a Rain Barrels

Collect rainwater to use for irrigation.



Runoff-reducing rain barrels