



How Citizens Can Help Control Stormwater Pollution



Stormwater Fact Sheet No. 3

This fact sheet is No. 3 of a eight-part series focused on stormwater runoff problems and control strategies. The series covers:

- 1) Stormwater Impacts
- 2) Human Health Impacts
- 3) How Citizens Can Help
- 4) Prevention and Control
- 5) Control for Development
- 6) Rules and Regulations
- 7) "How to" for Local Officials
- 8) Municipal Prevention



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What Is Stormwater Runoff?

Stormwater runoff is the rain or snowmelt that runs off streets, rooftops, parking lots, lawns and other land surfaces and eventually runs untreated into our streams.

Stormwater Is Not Clean Water!

Stormwater also picks up pollutants as it flows across land surfaces. Pollutants include:

- Sediment from bare areas such as construction sites
 - Pesticides and fertilizers from lawns, parks and roadsides
 - Bacteria and disease causing organisms from pet waste and failing septic systems
 - Oil and grease from car leaks, gas stations and industrial areas
 - Salt used on roads; and driveways, and
 - Toxic chemicals from leaks, spills and auto wear and exhaust.
- Sometimes pollutants (such as, used oil and paint thinners) are illegally dumped directly into storm drains and waterways.



Did You Know That Oil Dumped Into The Storm Sewer Pollutes Our Water?

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What You Can Do To Help:

As you can see, many of our daily activities have the potential to cause stormwater pollution. How you manage your day to day activities and property can determine the quality of your drinking water and local swimming and fishing areas. Remember, "You are the solution to pollution!" Here's how you can help prevent stormwater pollution:

- Minimize or reduce the impervious area of your property. For example, you could convert your impervious paved driveway and sidewalk to a pervious area using pervious concrete or brick pavers instead of asphalt.
- Divert roof drains and other runoff to vegetated areas on your property such as a raingardens or use rain barrels.
- Retain or create 50 to 100 foot buffers of vegetation between waterways and impervious areas to help filter out pollutants. The buffers can also improve fish habitat by keeping the water cool.
- Keep your vehicles tuned up and repair fuel or fluid leaks quickly.
- Wash your car on the lawn, not the driveway. Even if you don't live next to a stream, most urban areas have storm drains that lead directly to the stream.
- Stop soil erosion; plant vegetation on all bare areas.
- Never pour used oil, paint thinners, and other pollutants into storm drains or waterways or on the ground. Take these household hazardous wastes to a recycling/collection center. For more information on where to recycle items visit http://www.landofsky.org/planning/p_hhw_disposal.html#bunc.
- Properly use and store all household chemicals. Clean up spills quickly by absorbing and disposing of the items properly. Do not hose spill residue down the drain.
- Use lawn care practices that protect water quality. Minimize the use of fertilizers and pesticides on your lawn; sweep (don't wash) fertilizer off driveways and walkways; and compost yard wastes.
- Clean litter from the street and storm drains in front of your home and along stream banks to keep it out of our waters.
- Walk your dog in vegetated areas or bury or flush pet wastes.
- Design all new construction to prevent runoff and stormwater pollution.



Remember:

- What We Do On The Land Affects The Quality Of The Water We Drink And Use In So Many Ways
- Many Small Sources Of Pollution Add Up To Cause Big Water Quality Problems
- Natural Things Such As Soil, Leaves, Grass Clippings and Pet Waste Can Cause Water Pollution
- Waste Dumped Into Storm Sewers Goes Into Lakes, Streams and Coastal Waters Without Treatment
- Automobiles and Other Vehicles Cause Water Pollution As Well As Air Pollution
- Everyone Can Make A Difference!

How Your Group or Community Can Help

- Organize a Streamwatch Group which “adopts” a stream, river or lake in your community by contacting RiverLink at 828-252-8474.
- Conduct stream cleanups that remove trash and debris from waterways.
- Stencil storm drains with “Don’t Dump – Drains to Waterway” messages to inform citizens that dumping pollutes local waters. Contact RiverLink or Land of Sky Regional Council staff for assistance.
- Develop or expand community recycling/collection programs for used oil, household hazardous wastes and other potential pollutants.
- Organize school and public education programs on stormwater problems and solutions.
- Help develop or improve community programs that prevent soil erosion and thus reduce stormwater runoff and pollution.

Hire a Contractor That Knows the Stormwater Laws

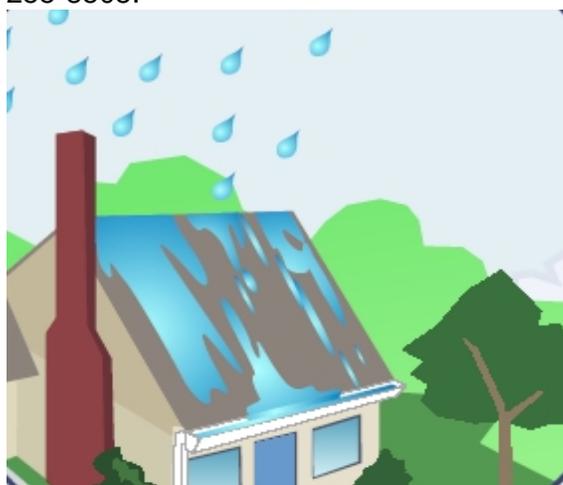
There are over 700 contractors who work in the land clearing business and who have been trained through the Clear Water Contractor program. This program was developed in 2000 and has received endorsements by the NC Sedimentation Control Commission. Contractors who have attended this program will have knowledge of how to address the issues facing your site development as well as whom to contact for regulatory advice. For more information contact the NC Division of Land Resources at 1-866-STOP-MUD (1-866-786-7683) or visit www.riverlink.org.



*Stenciling Storm Drains Is
One Good Community Project*

Hire an ECO-Realtor

The Asheville Board of REALTORS and over 15 environmental organizations have created an accredited program for realtors called the Environmental Consultant Realtor. Approved by the Asheville Board of REALTORS, ECO REALTORS have attended workshops which include information on sediment, erosion, and stormwater rules and regulations. For more information contact the Asheville Board of REALTORS at 828-255-8505.



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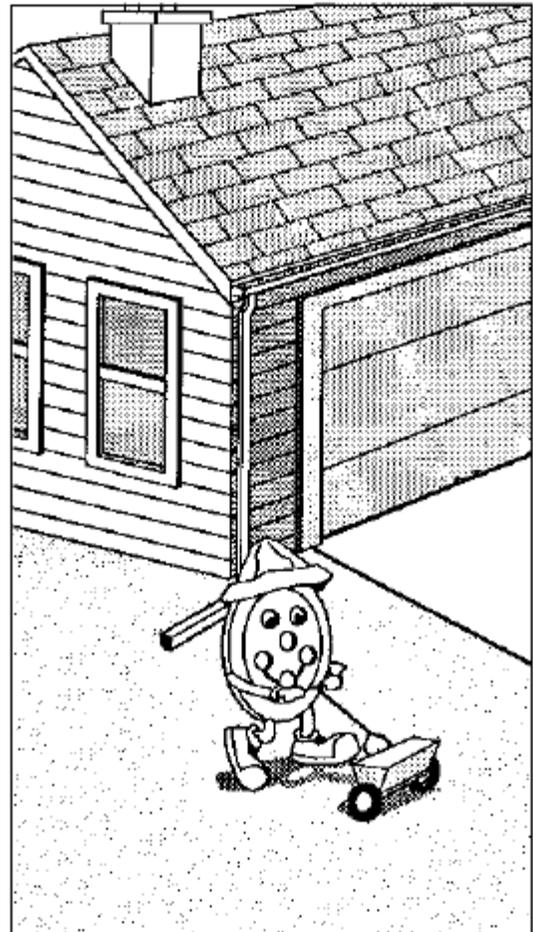
Contacts

- Appropriate Local Government Officials seris.info/RiverLink/techinfo.shtml
- Land of Sky Regional Council 251-6622.

For more information

- Appropriate Local Government Officials www.seris.info/RiverLink/techinfo.shtml
- Land of Sky Regional Council 251-6622.
- Center for Watershed Protection. www.cwp.org.
- North Carolina Division of Water Quality Stormwater Unit: Manuals and Factsheets
- www.h2o.enr.state.nc.us/su
- North Carolina Division of Water Quality Stormwater Permitting Unit: Stormwater Permitting Unit Home h2o.enr.state.nc.us/su/stormwater.html
- North Carolina Phase II Stormwater www.ncphase2sw.org/
- North Carolina State University www.bae.ncsu.edu/stormwater/
- RiverLink www.seris.info/RiverLink/techinfo.shtml or www.riverlink.org

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*Minimize The Use Of Fertilizers And Pesticides
On Your Lawn.*