

Our Creeks and Ocean are closer than you think.

Can you find the activities that contribute to storm drain pollution? The picture above shows how our every day activities result in pollutants entering the storm drains.

We can help prevent pollutants from entering storm drains and therefore our creeks, sloughs and ocean by following the suggestions below.

Automotive



When you change your car's oil, prevent spills by placing cardboard under the oil pan. Clean up spills quickly with an absorbent material like cat litter. Fully drain the old filter. Never pour the used oil on the ground, on fence posts, on gravel driveways, or down the storm drain. Recycle your used motor oil.



Never drain your car's antifreeze directly onto the ground or street. It is very poisonous to pets and wildlife which are attracted to its sweet smell and taste.



Wash your car on the lawn or a gravel surface, not on your paved driveway or street. Pour the leftover soapy water down a household sink so that it's treated by the sewage treatment system.

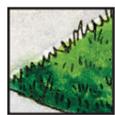


Have your car inspected and maintained regularly to reduce leakage of oil, antifreeze, and other fluids. Use a drip tray to catch leaks while your car is parked.



Reduce automotive emissions through regular auto maintenance, bicycling, ride sharing, and by using public transportation.

Household and Home Maintenance



To help rain percolate into the ground, keep as much of your property unpaved as possible. Consider porous asphalt or paving bricks for your driveway.



Use non-toxic alternatives whenever possible. When using toxic products, buy only the quantity you need and use it up. Follow safety instructions on the product container and store in a waterproof place out of reach of children and pets. Take unwanted toxic household products to the local household hazardous waste collection service for disposal. Never dump chemicals in ditches, gutters, storm drains, or near water.



When using latex paint, rinse paint brushes in the sink. When using paint thinner, pour a small amount into a sealable glass jar, clean the brushes, allow paint solids to settle and pour clean paint thinner back into its original container. Dispose of solids through the household hazardous waste collection service.



Control erosion at construction sites to prevent dirt and debris from entering storm drains by using silt fences or other measures. When pouring concrete, keep it away from gutters and creeks as it is very toxic to fish.

Lawn and Garden



Use non-toxic alternatives, if possible. Use pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers carefully and sparingly in accordance with label instructions. Do not apply if rain is forecast. Dispose of unwanted leftovers through the household hazardous waste collection service.



Use a broom rather than a hose to clean up lawn clippings and dirt. Deposit in a compost pile.



Divert rain spouts and garden hoses away from paved surfaces. Consider using a rain barrel.



Pick up animal wastes regularly and dispose of in the garbage.

Dumping just one quart of motor oil down a storm drain contaminates 250,000 gallons of water!