



City of Prattville
"The Preferred Community"

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DOWN STREAM

*A Guide For Preventing Urban
Runoff and Stormwater Pollution*



Why Should I Be Concerned About Stormwater Pollution?

Urban runoff is the water that flows off our yards, streets, parking lots, and driveways into the storm drains and eventually into our creeks and waterways.

Stormwater pollution occurs during any rain event, when rain water and runoff from our gutters pickup pollutants from our streets and carry them into the storm sewer.

In either case, whether by rain or by everyday activities like washing a car or watering the lawn, runoff water flows into the storm drains picking up pollutants like soil, motor oil, fertilizers and pet waste. These contaminants end up in our waterways and can be harmful to fish, animals, and water quality.

Following the practices outlined in this booklet will help to keep our waterways clean and healthy.

Litter Reduction and Trash Disposal

- ★ Put cigarette butts in ash trays, never throw cigarette butts into the street.
- ★ Limit litter by bagging trash before placing into the trash container.
- ★ Do not overfill trash containers. Keep container lid closed.
- ★ Limit waste by choosing reusable shopping bags, lunchboxes, and food containers instead of single use items.





How Is The Storm Sewer Different Than The Sanitary Sewer?

- ★ The storm sewer system leads directly to our local creeks, rivers and lakes. Since stormwater typically originates from rainfall, it is not treated before it is released back into the environment.
- ★ The sanitary sewer system leads directly to a wastewater treatment plant where sewage passes through physical and biological treatment and undergoes a disinfection process before the treated water is released into local waterways.



Managing Household Chemicals

- ★ Keep household chemicals like cleaners, solvents, and paint in their original containers and never remove labels.
- ★ Only buy what you need. Don't "stock up" on products you'll never use.
- ★ Purchase biodegradable, nontoxic, or recycled/recyclable products when available.





Sewer System Use

- ★ Limit inflow of rainwater into the sanitary sewer. Disconnect gutters from the sewer system and ensure cleanout caps are tightly affixed.
- ★ Avoid the use of garbage disposals; dispose of table scraps in the garbage.
- ★ Use paper towels to wipe grease from dishes, pots, and pans before washing.
- ★ Freeze used cooking oils in a spill-proof container and place in your trash container on your scheduled collection day.



Lawn Care

- ★ Apply only the recommended amount of fertilizer for your yard size.
- ★ Sweep up grass clippings and leaves and use as garden mulch or compost instead of sweeping or blowing them into the street.
- ★ Select native plants and grasses that are drought-resistant and require less water and fertilizer.



Pesticide and Herbicide Use

- ★ Do not apply on a windy day or when rain is forecasted.
- ★ Follow directions on the label and use only the amount recommended.
- ★ Only mix the amount you will use in one day.
- ★ Clean up spills right away.



Car Washing

- ★ Wash your vehicle at a commercial car wash. Commercial car wash facilities are connected to the sanitary sewer system which conveys wash water to a wastewater treatment plant.
- ★ If you do wash your vehicle at home, wash it on an unpaved surface, such as your lawn, where the wash water will water your yard instead of making its way into the street or storm drain. Your lawn will appreciate the added water and nutrients from the soap.
- ★ Choose environmentally-friendly soaps and cleaners labeled “non-toxic,” “biodegradable,” or “phosphate-free.”



Vehicle Maintenance

- ★ Use tarps or drip pans when working on your vehicle or when your car is leaking.
- ★ When cleaning up spills, use an absorbent such as kitty litter or sawdust. Once the liquid is absorbed, sweep it up, put in a plastic garbage bag, and place in a trash container.
- ★ Work in an area with a concrete floor so that spills can be easily confined and cleaned up.



Pet Waste

- ★ Carry a plastic bag or container to pick up pet waste in your yard, at the dog park, and while walking your pet.
- ★ Dispose of pet waste properly by bagging and placing into trash.

