

# Ten Ways Homeowners Can Improve the Quality of Stormwater Runoff

1. Cover piles of soil, sand or mulch to stop them from being transported in stormwater. Plant grass where soil is exposed.
2. Sweep your sidewalks and driveways rather than hosing them down.
3. Put leaves and grass clippings in the compost, on the garden as mulch, or mow back into the lawn to recycle nutrients.
4. Divert roof water to lawns or gardens where it can safely soak in.



5. Keep pesticides, oil, leaves and other pollutants off streets and out of storm drains.

6. Keep cars tuned up and repair leaks - better yet, walk, bike or utilize public transportation.



7. Wash your vehicle on grass or over gravel. Use as little detergent as you can and pour any left over soapy water onto the lawn.

8. Dispose of household hazardous waste according to the label directions. Reuse turpentine once the paint has settled.
9. Clean up pet waste - bury it or flush it down the toilet.
10. Have your septic system inspected by a professional every 3 to 5 years and have the septic system pumped as necessary (usually every 3 to 5 years).



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Participating municipalities include the Towns of Camillus, Cicero, Clay, Dewitt, Geddes, LaFayette, Lysander, Manlius, Marcellus, Onondaga, Salina, Sullivan, Van Buren, the Villages of Baldwinsville, Camillus, East Syracuse, Fayetteville, Liverpool, Manlius, Marcellus, Minoa, North Syracuse, Solvay, the City of Syracuse and Madison and Onondaga Counties.



Information Provided by:

“Making Your Home the Solution to Pollution” by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, “After the Storm: A Citizen’s Guide to Understanding Stormwater” by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, “Stormwater Pollution: The Difference is You” by the NSW Environmental Protection Authority, US Census 2000, NYS GIS Hydrologic data, NYS DEC Wetland data, Priority Waterbodies and 303d Lists, and [www.cleanrivers-pdx.org](http://www.cleanrivers-pdx.org)

# Reducing the Impacts of Stormwater Pollution

## What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is rain that falls on roofs, lawns, or paved areas like driveways and roads, and is carried away by a system of stormwater pipes or culverts and ditches. As it flows over the land surface, stormwater picks up or is contaminated by debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants. This untreated water is discharged into the waterbodies we use for swimming, fishing and drinking water.



## Why Should You Care?

- Sediment clouds the water making it difficult for aquatic plants to grow.
- Sediment deposits fill in fish spawning beds and deep pools. Fish eggs are buried and food supplies are reduced.
- Excess nutrients cause algae blooms and deplete oxygen supplies.
- Bacteria and other pathogens discharged in swimming areas create health hazards.
- Debris washed into the water can choke, suffocate or disable aquatic life.
- Household hazardous wastes can poison aquatic life.
- Boating, swimming and other recreational activities are impaired due to sediment filled navigation channels and decreased water clarity.
- Polluted stormwater often affects drinking water sources - human health is at risk and water treatment costs rise.

## Interesting Facts about the Syracuse Urban Area (SUA)

Number of Regulated Communities in the SUA:	35
Regulated SUA Communities Working Together:	27
Total Land Area (sq. miles):	184
Total Population of SUA:	401,942
Total Housing Units:	174,386
Total Area of Surface Water (sq. miles):	5
Total Area of Wetlands (sq. miles):	10
Number of Impaired Waters due to Stormwater Pollutants:	13

## Stormwater Pollutants of Concern

**Coliform** - Pathogens or bacteria, possibly from illicit discharges or pet waste, that are responsible for periodic beach closings.

**Floatables** - Street litter or debris that floats on or near the water surface and can be harmful or fatal to aquatic organisms.

**Oil/Grease** - A pollutant that often enters the water via storm drains and road runoff which damages animal's skin and can cause poisonings, blindness and liver damage.

**Phosphorus** - An element that is easily transported via sediment into the water. Excess phosphorus causes algal blooms, decreases water clarity and reduces dissolved oxygen.

**Settleable Solids** - Soil or other particles that settle on the lake or stream bottom and destroy aquatic habitats, spawning areas and may contaminate bottom feeding organisms.

**Suspended Solids** - Smaller soil particles transported via runoff and erosion that decrease water clarity and food supplies.

