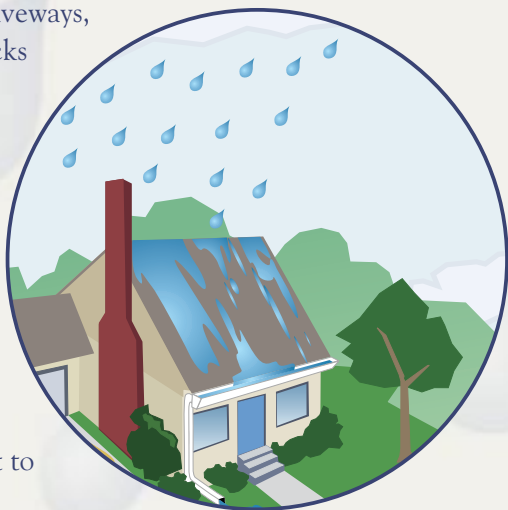


**A**s stormwater flows over driveways, lawns, and sidewalks, it picks up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants. Stormwater can flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland, or coastal water. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the waterbodies we use for swimming, fishing, and providing drinking water. Polluted runoff is the nation's greatest threat to clean water.



By practicing healthy household habits, homeowners can keep common pollutants like pesticides, pet waste, grass clippings, and automotive fluids off the ground and out of stormwater. Adopt these healthy household habits and help protect lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, and coastal waters. Remember to share the habits with your neighbors!

## Pet Care

- When walking your pet, remember to **pick up** the waste and dispose of it properly. Flushing pet waste is the best disposal method. Leaving pet waste on the ground increases public health risks by allowing harmful bacteria and nutrients to wash into the storm drain and eventually into local waterbodies.

## Swimming Pool and Spa

- **Drain** your swimming pool only when a test kit does not detect chlorine levels.
- Whenever possible, drain your pool or spa into the **sanitary** sewer system.
- Properly store pool and spa chemicals to **prevent** leaks and spills, preferably in a covered area to avoid exposure to stormwater.

## Septic System Use and Maintenance

- Have your septic system **inspected** by a professional at least every 3 years, and have the septic tank **pumped** as necessary (usually every 3 to 5 years).
- Care for the septic system drainfield by **not** driving or parking vehicles on it. Plant only grass over and near the drainfield to avoid damage from roots.
- Flush responsibly. Flushing household chemicals like paint, pesticides, oil, and antifreeze can **destroy** the biological treatment taking place in the system. Other items, such as diapers, paper towels, and cat litter, can **clog** the septic system and potentially damage components.

*Storm drains connect to waterbodies!*



**Remember: Only rain down the drain!**

For more information, visit  
[www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater](http://www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater)  
or  
[www.epa.gov/nps](http://www.epa.gov/nps)



EPA 833-B-03-003

**January 2003**



Internet Address (URL) • [HTTP://www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)  
Recycled/Recyclable • Printed With Vegetable Oil Based Inks on 100% Postconsumer,  
Process Chlorine Free Recycled Paper



Make your home  
**The**  
**SOLUTION**  
**TO STORMWATER**  
**POLLUTION!**

*A homeowner's guide to healthy  
habits for clean water*

