You are the solution to water pollution

A guide for preventing water pollution in your own backyard…

Even if you live miles away from a river or stream, you may be polluting the water without even knowing it.

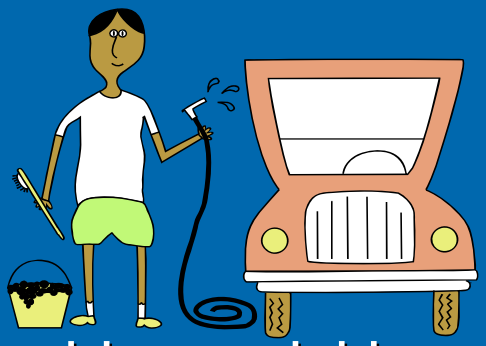
- Pollutants from our homes contribute to non-point source pollution.
- Pollutants such as pet wastes, sediment, used motor oil, garden/lawn chemicals, paint, and home cleaning products are washed into storm drains when we wash paved areas, over-water our lawns, or when it rains.
- These pollutants flow untreated, directly to our local rivers and streams.
- These untreated pollutants can cause harm to wildlife and fish, ruin recreation areas, and increase the costs of treating municipal drinking water sources.

What is non-point source pollution?

- Non-point source pollution is caused by our activities.
- The resulting pollutants are carried to streams and rivers by stormwater run-off from streets, neighborhoods, parking lots, farmlands, and construction sites.

What are some non-point sources of pollution?

- Washing cars on paved surfaces



- Sediment from land-disturbing activities

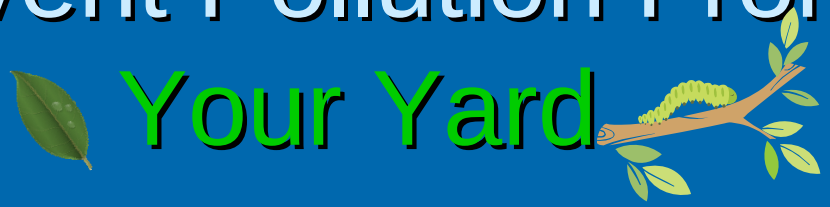
- Lawn and garden chemicals

- Pet and yard waste

- Improper disposal of oil and other automotive fluids

Prevent Pollution From:

Your Yard

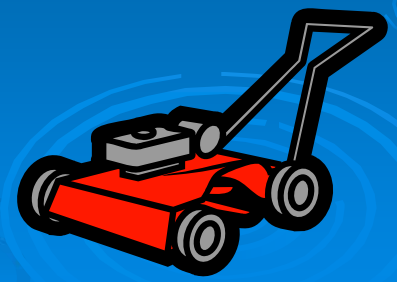


- Keep leaves and grass clippings out of the streets, drainage ditches, storm drains and creeks.
- Choose grass and plants with low maintenance and water needs. Choose native vegetation when possible.
- Set the blade higher on your lawn mower to reduce stress to the grass and create a drought tolerant lawn.
- Test soil for nutrient levels (University of Georgia's Cooperative Extension Service provides residential soil-testing services). Based on the test results, choose the proper type and amount of fertilizer for your lawn.
- Do not apply fertilizer or pesticides before heavy rain is forecasted.

Prevent Pollution From:

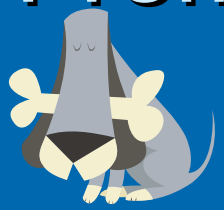
Your Yard

- Sweep up fertilizer that is spread out on sidewalks or streets instead of using water to wash it off.
- Use only the recommended amount or concentration of fertilizer/pesticides.
- Properly store pesticides and fertilizers in a dry, indoors location.
- Spot-treat problem areas with pesticides instead of a broad application.
- Compost yard debris and use it as fertilizer.



Prevent Pollution From:

Your Pets



- Pick up your pet's waste and flush it or wrap it up and place it in the trash.
- Restrict pets from streamside areas.
- Use preventative maintenance, such as flea combing, shampooing, frequently mowing the grass, and cleaning and vacuuming pet areas to reduce the need for chemical flea treatments.
- Ask your veterinarian about topical flea treatments (as an alternative to treating the entire yard).

Prevent Pollution From:

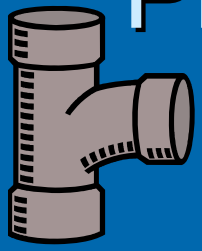
Your Vehicles

- Wash vehicles on your lawn instead of on the driveway or street (to keep detergents from entering storm drains).
- Never dump any fluids down a storm drain, or into a ditch or creek.
- Used fluids, such as motor oil and anti-freeze, can be recycled at various locations throughout the county.
- Clean up spills as soon as they happen and properly dispose of the waste.

Prevent Pollution From:

Your Vehicles

- The following can be recycled:
  - Transmission fluid
  - Used tires
  - Brake fluid
  - Used oil filters
  - Car batteries
  - Antifreeze
  - Used motor oil



Prevent Pollution From: Your Septic System

- Flush only waste and toilet paper.
- Do not flush non-biodegradable items such as diapers, kitty litter, fats, baby wipes, cigarette butts, and coffee grinds.
- Use several drops of food coloring in the toilet tank to identify leaks. If you see food coloring in the bowl, find and fix the leak as soon as possible.
- Have your septic system pumped every 3-5 years.
- Contact the Coweta County Water and Sewerage Authority to see if your home can be hooked to the sanitary sewer system.