



# Minnesota River is closer than you think.

Can you find the activities in the picture that contribute to water pollution? How do these everyday activities result in pollutants entering the storm drains?

## Automotive

**Recycle** used motor oil by taking it to an auto parts store or hazardous waste collection site. When changing your car's oil, prevent spills by placing cardboard under the oil pan. Use absorbent material such as kitty litter to clean up spills. Never pour used motor oil down storm drains, on the ground, or driveways.



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



**Wash** cars on unpaved surfaces, or at a commercial car wash. Leftover soapy water should be poured down a household sink or toilet (to be treated by a sewage plant), not the driveway, gutter, street or storm drain which lead directly to the river without treatment.



**Inspect** and maintain your car regularly to prevent leakage of oil, antifreeze, and other toxic fluids. Use a drip tray to catch leaks where your car is parked.



**Reduce** automobile pollution by carpooling, walking, riding your bike, or using public transportation



## Household & Home Maintenance

**Keep** as much of your property landscaped as possible. Planted areas absorb more rainwater and help water percolate into the ground. Bare soil promotes water runoff. As an alternative to concrete driveways, use paving bricks, which help reduce runoff.



**Take** unwanted chemicals like paint and pesticides to your local hazardous waste collection site. Use non-toxic household products, if possible. When using toxic products follow directions carefully and use sparingly. Properly store toxic products away from children. Never dump chemicals down storm drains, ditches, gutters, or waterways.



**Rinse** paint brushes in the sink when using water-based latex paint. Avoid using oil-based paint. Recycle paint thinner by pouring a small amount into a sealable glass jar, cleaning brushes, and allowing paint solids to settle. Then pour clean paint thinner back into original container. Dispose of unused paint, varnishes and solvents at the household hazardous waste collection site.



**Control** erosion at construction sites, by preventing dirt and debris from entering gutters and storm drains. Use hay bales as a silt fence to prevent runoff. When pouring concrete, keep runoff away from storm drains and waterways as it is harmful to fish.



## Lawn & Garden

**Use** non-toxic alternatives to pesticides and organic gardening techniques when possible. Plant native Minnesota species which need less water than imported varieties. Use herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers sparingly. Follow label instructions carefully. Do not apply products if rain is forecast. Never dump chemicals in ditches, gutters, storm drains, or waterways. Never use motor oil to kill weeds along fences or in yards. Motor oil poured in soil contaminates water. Take unwanted toxic products to local hazardous waste collection sites.



**Sweep** driveways, patios, and sidewalks rather than hosing them down into the gutters and storm drains. Put lawn clippings and leaves in a compost pile or at the city compost site.



**Water** only your garden and lawn, not your driveways and sidewalks. Divert garden hoses and rain spouts to reduce water runoff from entering storm drains. Consider using a rain barrel to collect water for flower bed and lawn watering.



**Pick** up animal wastes regularly and dispose of in the toilet or trash can, not down the storm drain.

