

“The Dirty Dozen” 12 Tips to Prevent Stormwater Pollution

- Remember to turn off your sprinklers when it rains to avoid water runoff; during winter runoff can freeze causing slippery conditions. No matter how you water it, concrete will not bloom! Prevent runoff and save the water for your plants!
- Bag your pet’s waste—don’t just leave it there. Leaving pet waste on the ground increases public health risk by allowing harmful bacteria and nutrients to wash into the storm drain and eventually into local waterways.
- Don’t apply pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides before it rains. Contrary to popular belief, the rain won’t help to soak these chemicals into the ground; it will only help create polluted runoff into our local creeks.
- Select native and adapted plants and grasses that are drought and pest resistant. Native plants require less water, fertilizer, and pesticides.
- Reduce the amount of paved area and increase the amount of vegetated area in your yard. Vegetation can help act as a natural filter for polluted stormwater runoff.
- If you change your car’s oil, don’t dump it on the ground or in the storm drain; dispose of it properly at an oil-recycling center.
- Check your car, boat, or motorcycle for leaks. Clean up spilled fluids with an absorbent material, don’t rinse the spills into the storm drain.
- Don’t get rid of grass clippings and other yard waste by dumping it or sweeping it into the storm drain; this will cause depleted oxygen for aquatic life. Instead, compost your yard waste.
- When washing your car at home, wash with only water or use biodegradable soap and wash it on a lawn or other unpaved surface; better yet take your car to a professional car wash.
- Don’t get rid of old or unused paint by throwing it down the storm drain; dispose of paint and other household hazardous waste at recycling facilities.
- Don’t pump your pool water into the storm drain—pool chemicals can be hazardous to our creek habitats. Whenever possible, drain your pool into the sanitary sewer system where it can be treated.
- Don’t mess with Minnesota! Throw litter away in a garbage can, not out your window. Recycle what you can!

If you have questions, please contact the
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