

# Minimizing Storm Water Pollution Around Your Home

## Simple things homeowners can do to minimize storm water pollution:

- Prevent soil erosion by maintaining a healthy lawn. Seed bare spots.
- Sweep dirt, grass clippings and leaves away from impervious surfaces. Do not dump into storm sewer or drainage ways. Leave them on the lawn or take to a compost facility. Allowing these to enter the storm sewer system not only increases the chance of flooding by reducing the capacity of the storm sewer system but also adds phosphorous to lakes and wetlands and increases the likelihood of algae growth.



- Conduct soil tests before applying fertilizers to lawn. Only apply what is needed or closely follow the label instruction. Sweep off any fertilizer that ends up on the sidewalk, driveway, street or any other impervious surface. Do not apply prior to or while it is raining.
  - Direct water from downspout away from impervious surfaces and onto the lawn. Consider installing rain gardens or rain barrels to collect water. Note: it is a violation of city codes to direct downspout water onto the neighbor's property or directly into the storm system.
  - Select native plants and grasses that are drought and pest resistant for your yard. They require less water, fertilizer and pesticides.
- Keep herbicides and pesticides off impervious surfaces and apply them at the correct rate and time.
  - Don't allow automotive and household chemicals to drain into the storm sewer system.
  - Keep garbage covered and pick up trash.
  - Pick up pet waste which contains harmful bacteria and nutrients that degrade water quality.
  - Drain swimming pool only after chlorine is below detectable levels. If possible, discharge water over landscaped area before reaching the street.
  - Avoid washing your car on the driveway or in the street. Use a commercial car wash where waste water is drained to the sanitary sewer. If you wash your car at home, use phosphate free, biodegradable soap and wash your car on the lawn.

