

# Stormwater 101



TATA & HOWARD

## What is it?

Stormwater is precipitation that runs off impervious surfaces, such as rooftops, paved areas, lawns, and bare soil, directly into lakes and streams. Because it does not infiltrate and is therefore not filtered prior to entering ground or surface waters, stormwater is contaminated by everything it picks up along the way. Common problems associated with waters polluted by stormwater include bacterial and nitrogen overload, low-oxygen dead zones, toxic algae blooms, litter-strewn waterways, damage to coastal marshes, and beach closures. In addition, pollutants carried by stormwater can harm or kill fish and wildlife, destroy vegetation and wildlife habitats, and foul drinking water. All of these problems come with a very high environmental and monetary price tag. The most cost-effective way to manage stormwater pollution is to prevent it in the first place!

## What causes it?

- A** Street runoff of motor oil, gasoline, antifreeze
- B** Road salt
- C** Industrial waste
- D** Pesticides and fertilizers
- E** Pet and yard waste
- F** Trash and cigarette butts
- G** Rooftop and driveway runoff and leaky septic systems

## How can we help?

- 🌊 Unclog residential storm drainages that become blocked
- 🌊 Cover piles of dirt, mulch, yard waste, and other debris
- 🌊 Dispose of chemicals, such as motor oil and grease, properly
- 🌊 Wash vehicles on the lawn or other unpaved, porous surface
- 🌊 Direct downspouts away from paved surfaces, and clean roof gutters
- 🌊 Check vehicles for leaks
- 🌊 Avoid pesticides by utilizing Integrated Pest Management
- 🌊 Sweep driveways and walkways instead of hosing them off
- 🌊 Cover trash containers and clean up pet waste
- 🌊 Have septic systems professionally inspected and pumped every other year

