



# A Resident's Guide for Stormwater Management

City of Brunswick Public Works Department

[www.brunswickmd.gov](http://www.brunswickmd.gov)



## What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is rainfall or snowmelt that runs off surfaces such as roads, compacted ground surfaces and rooftops. As the stormwater runoff moves, it can pick up and carry away natural and man-made pollutants such as fertilizer and animal waste. Eventually, the runoff deposits the pollutants into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters and even our underground sources of drinking water. This is called nonpoint source pollution.

## Sewer System vs Storm Water Drain

Sewer systems and storm water drains are two different things. The water that goes down a sink or toilet flows to a wastewater treatment plant where it is treated and filtered. Water that flows down driveways and streets into a ditch is not treated and goes into a storm drain that flows directly to a lake, river or the ocean.

## Pollutants Harm our Water

We rely on clean water to drink, to support wildlife, to fill our lakes and rivers and to wash up onto the shores of our beaches. Pollutants can contaminate clean drinking water sources, kill off local wildlife and close lakes and rivers.

## How can YOU Prevent Stormwater Pollution?

- Don't dump yard waste, including organic material such as leaves and grass clippings, in storm drains.
- Inspect and maintain your car to prevent oil and antifreeze leaks.
- Dispose of household chemicals properly by taking them to a recycling station.
- Use kitty litter to clean up leaks and spills instead of washing them into the gutter.
- Buy household and garden products that are environmentally safe.

## Common Stormwater Pollutants

There are a variety of pollutants that can easily enter our storm drains. Rain picks up oil and sediment left on the roads; sprinklers wash pesticides, fertilizers and weed killers from our gardens and lawns; washing the car carries detergents, oils and grease from the driveway into our waterways.

Motor Oil - Only four quarts of motor oil can create an 8-acre oil slick and contaminate a million gallons of drinking water.

Antifreeze - Antifreeze is a toxic pollutant that can kill not only aquatic life but also pets when they drink from contaminated puddles.

Animal Waste - Pet and other animal waste is raw sewage that releases bacteria and oxygen-consuming materials into our waterways.

Soaps and Detergents - Detergents are pollutants that contain phosphorus which contributes to algae blooms. Algae blooms deplete waterways of oxygen and cause fish kills.

Yard Debris - Yard waste (grass clippings and leaves) is a pollutant that releases bacteria, and oxygen-consuming materials, like phosphorus and nitrogen, into our waterways. It also clogs storm drains, which contributes to flooding.

## What to do if you see Stormwater Pollution

- If you see stormwater pollution in the City of Brunswick, please contact the City's Stormwater Inspector by filling out the Stormwater Incident Report (SIR) or by calling 301-834-7500.
- The SIR can be found on the City's website, under the Residents section. Click on the Residents tab, then click on Stormwater Resources.
- Once you are on the Stormwater Resources page, you can follow the prompt for the SIR. Once you fill out the SIR and click submit, it will be sent to the Stormwater Inspector for investigation.