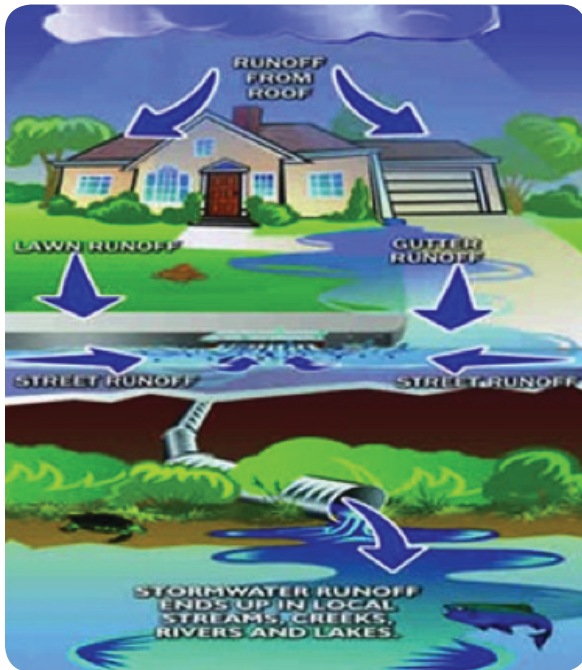


Common Things That Can Harm Our Waterways:

- Soil, leaves, yard clippings and litter can clog storm drains, leading to local flooding.
- Fertilizer, as well as soil, leaves and yard clippings, can introduce excessive nutrients into area waterways. This can cause algae blooms and pea-green water, making it difficult for plants and animals to survive.
- When it rains, pet waste on the ground can contribute to large amounts of bacteria entering nearby waterways. This can cause the water to become unsafe for swimming and other recreational activities.



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What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is rainwater, plus the substances that are collected as the rain flows over the land. Many of these items, such as litter, soil, leaves and yard clippings, fertilizer, pesticide, pet waste and petroleum, can be extremely harmful to our environment and the stormwater drainage system.

Why is Stormwater Runoff Pollution Important?

Tallahassee's lakes and streams provide great recreation to residents of all ages. Our community takes pride in these resources and strives to protect their quality.

One of the threats to our local waterways is the pollution contained in stormwater runoff.

What is a Stormwater Drainage System?

Runoff from water flowing over land and roads is collected in a stormwater drainage system. This system can either be underground in large pipes or above ground in roadside ditches or swales and discharged to our local waterways. The stormwater drainage system is not part of the sewer system. Ultimately, stormwater that doesn't evaporate or soak into the ground can end up in our area's lakes, rivers and streams.

Ways to Help Prevent Stormwater Pollution:

Plant a Rain Garden

Rain gardens are like smaller versions of holding ponds. They are specially designed landscaped areas, which help collect stormwater and filter pollutants before the water soaks into the ground or runs off into local waterways. Rain gardens also help to slow the flow of water, which helps prevent soil erosion from your yard.

Properly Dispose of Household Waste

Typical household waste can be found in your kitchen, bathroom, garage or workshop. Fuel, oil, ammonia, aerosols, bleach, paint, pool chemicals, herbicides, pesticides and other potentially harmful items should be properly disposed of at the Hazardous Waste Center located at 7550 Apalachee Parkway.

Avoid Overuse of Lawn Chemicals

Less is best when it comes to fertilizer. Use it only as needed, preferably only twice a year – in the spring and fall. It's important to follow the label directions. Also, choose a phosphate-free fertilizer with at least half the nitrogen in slow-release or water-insoluble form. Never fertilize before a storm or the costly fertilizer may wash away. And be sure to reduce use of pesticides and herbicides as well.



Protect Exposed Soil

Use yard clippings, leaves and mulch to cover bare, exposed soil. This will divert stormwater runoff from the bare area and help prevent erosion.

Use a Professional Car Wash

Opt for a professional car wash. The water is recycled, which conserves water and prevents detergents and other chemicals from reaching our local lakes, rivers and streams. Or wash your car on the grass instead of on a paved surface. The grass and soil will help remove some of the pollutants as water soaks into the ground, keeping it away from our waterways. Washing your car with environmentally friendly soaps will help even more.

Pick Up Pet Waste

Pick up pet waste and place it in the garbage or bury it in the ground before it gets washed away by the rain. Dog waste contains high levels of bacteria.

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