

Making Your Home the Solution to Stormwater Pollution

Stormwater pollution occurs whenever rain or snow melt flows over the land picking up dirt, debris, chemicals and other pollutants and directly discharges these contaminants into lakes, streams, rivers, or other wetlands without treatment. Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals, as well as people by destroying aquatic habitats, causing eutrophication of lakes, and by discharging hazardous waste, bacteria and other pathogens into our fishing, swimming, and drinking water supplies.

Homeowners unknowingly contribute significantly to stormwater pollution. Here are things you can do to minimize your impact on the environment.

1. Follow environmentally sound lawn care practices such as planting native species, limiting fertilizer and pesticide use, composting yard waste and not overwatering which creates runoff. Collect rainwater from rooftops in mosquito-proof rain barrels and use this water to water your lawn and gardens. Never dump yard debris in wetlands or drainage areas.
2. Be conscious when working on your vehicles: Wash your car on your lawn so that the wastewater infiltrates into the ground. Never dump any kind of automotive fluids on the ground or into the stormwater system. Always discard of automotive fluids and batteries at designated drop-off and recycling locations.
3. Check your vehicles, boats, watercrafts and other equipment and machinery regularly for leaks and spills. Clean up spills with absorbent materials immediately and dispose of properly. Do not wash spills into nearby storm drains.
4. Maintain your septic system: Have it pumped regularly and never dispose of household hazardous waste in sinks or toilets.
5. Always pick up after your pets and dispose of properly.
6. Properly store pool and spa chemicals to prevent leaks and spills, preferably in a covered area to avoid exposure to stormwater.
7. As the summer nears an end...Only drain your swimming pools once chlorine can not be detected with a test kit. Do not drain pool water into storm drains or detention basins.
8. Never dispose of household hazardous waste such as paints, thinners, and cleaners down the drain. Collect all hazardous waste and dispose of them at Tyngsborough's Annual Household Hazardous Waste Day.

Stormwater pollution is a very serious problem becoming the number one cause of our degraded waterways. Please help improve the water quality of Tyngsborough. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 978-649-2300 ext. 116 or email loric@tyngsboroughmass.com