

Road Department

February 2018

Please Do Not Pollute and Follow These Storm Water Tips:

Have your oil changed by a professional. If you do it yourself, recycle your used oil and oil filter at a certified collection center or household hazardous waste collection site. Buy recycled motor oil for your car. Clean up leaks and spills with an absorbent materials such as kitty litter. Sweep and dispose. Have your car tuned up and make sure it's not leaking fluids.

Antifreeze, made from the chemical ethylene glycol, is extremely toxic. Drain your radiator into a drip pan to avoid spills, and take the old antifreeze in a sealed container to a household hazardous waste collection site. Try a less toxic alternative. Antifreeze made from propylene glycol, manufacturers claim, has a lower freezing point, a higher boiling point and lasts longer.

Recycle leaves, grass clippings and other yard waste, instead of blowing, sweeping or hosing them into the street or gutter. Try grass cycling, letting grass clippings drop on your lawn, instead of using a grass catcher. The clippings act as a natural fertilizer, returning nutrients and organic matter back to the soil, and because grass is mostly water, it also irrigates your lawn, conserving water. Reducing the need to water as often or use toxic fertilizers means less contaminated runoff from your lawn. Do not overwater lawns and gardens.

Wash your vehicle at a washing facility that reclaims wash water, preventing oil, grease and toxic fluids from washing into the street and the storm drain system. Use only soaps, cleaners and detergents labeled phosphate free or biodegradable. The safest products for the environment are vegetable based or citrus based soaps. Select a site where the wash water can soak into grass, gravel or be diverted to nearby landscaping. Sweep driveways instead of hosing.

Use water-based paints whenever possible. Look for products labeled "latex" or "cleans with water." Avoid cleaning brushes or rinsing containers in the street or gutter. For water-based paint, rinse them in the sink. For oil-based paint, clean them with thinner, which can be filtered and reused. Never dump paint or paint-related products in the trash, gutter or a storm drain. Take them to a household hazardous waste collection site to be recycled. Paint stripping residue, chips and dust from marine paints and paints containing lead or tributyl tin are hazardous wastes. Sweep them up and take them in a sealed container to a household hazardous waste collection site. Dispose of all chemicals according to the instructions on the containers.

Never drain a pool, fountain, or spa into a storm drain. The chemicals in the water will quickly pollute any nearby waterway. Find out if your community has sanitary sewers you can use to drain large quantities of water.

Don't over-apply ice melt. Choose products that are environmentally friendly and avoid using sand whenever possible.

Pet droppings. It gets into storm drains, polluting our creeks, channels and rivers. But preventing this pollution is easy. Clean it up and dispose of it properly in the toilet or trash. If possible, bathe your pets indoors, using less toxic shampoos, or have your pet professionally groomed. Pet shampoos and soaps, even those that are biodegradable, can be toxic to people and marine life. Consider using alternatives such as oral or topical flea control products. If you use flea control products such as shampoos, sprays or collars, make sure to dispose of unused quantities properly.

When conducting horse and livestock activities such as building a corral, feeding livestock or cleaning and grooming horses, follow these simple tips to prevent discharges from entering storm drains.

Site barns, corrals and other high-use areas on the portions of the property that drain away from the nearest creek or storm drain. Restrict animal access to creeks and streams, preferably by fencing. Cover and protect manure storage facilities from rainfall and surface runoff. Install gutters that will divert runoff away from livestock areas. Confine animals in properly fenced areas, except during exercise and grazing. Animal areas should be swept or shoveled at least once a day, and not hosed down to a stream or storm drain. During heavy rainfall, consider indoor feeding, a practice which keeps more manure under a roof and away from runoff.

If you are on a septic system, maintain the system. Septic systems require regular inspections, maintenance and pumping, or they will fail, cost a lot of money to fix and could pollute nearby lakes and streams. Have a professional inspector check your system regularly and have it pumped out when needed.

Replace disposable items with reusable ones such as bottles, plates and cups; and Recycle! Keep recyclables and trash in covered and secured containers. Use reusable bags instead of disposable bags.

If there is a storm drain near your home, be sure the grate is free of debris. Small amounts of debris can cause significant water backups.

If you have a basement sump pump, periodically check the float and electrical connections. Consider a battery backup unit in case of power failure.

If you see illicit discharge or dumping, please contact the St. Clair County Storm Water Hotline at 618-825-2690. All public inquiries and complaints will be responded to and recorded.

Mission: To facilitate the rapid, safe, and economical movement of people and goods in St. Clair Township.

To simplify it: Never put anything down a storm drain - ONLY RAIN IN THE STORM DRAIN.

Jim Hursey

St. Clair Township Highway Commissioner.