

## Why Your Actions Matter

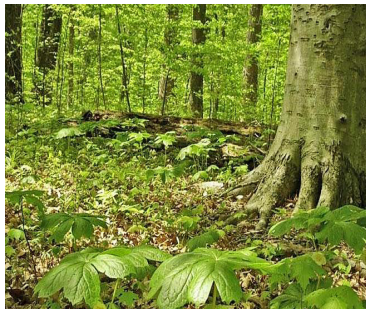
Individuals are more important than ever in improving and preserving our streams for wildlife, recreation, drinking water, quality of life, and as a legacy for our children.

How do our actions influence water quality? Rainwater that runs off hard surfaces including roads, parking lots, roofs, sidewalks, and driveways is piped directly to streams without cleaning or filtering.

This runoff carries everything picked up along its path including litter, chemicals, and excess nutrients.

Even clean runoff causes problems in Franklin County because of the amount of water entering streams and rivers after a rain. The extra runoff from hard surfaces causes streambank erosion, property loss, and even flooding.

These simple tips can help keep our streams and rivers healthy for all of us.



*"The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants and animals, or collectively the land."*

*Aldo Leopold*

## Reporting Problems

If you see someone putting anything down a storm drain or directly into a stream or river, obtain a license plate number or address and report it to *It's a Crime* at (614) 871-5322 or [www.itsacime.org](http://www.itsacime.org).

**Chemical and petroleum spills:** call the Ohio EPA 24-hour hotline, (800) 282-9378.

**Sewage-related pollution:** call the Franklin County Public Health 24-hour hotline, (614) 525-3965 or e-mail [failingHSTS@franklincountyohio.gov](mailto:failingHSTS@franklincountyohio.gov).

**Agriculture or manure-related pollution:** call Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District at (614) 486-9613, or use the "Contact Us" tab at [www.franklinswcd.org](http://www.franklinswcd.org).

You can also contact Franklin Soil and Water about any other non-emergency pollution and we will inform the proper agency.

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners has provided residents with a mobile app that can be used to report water pollution. Download the free app at the iTunes store or at Google Play.



**Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District**

Creating Conservation Solutions for Over 60 Years

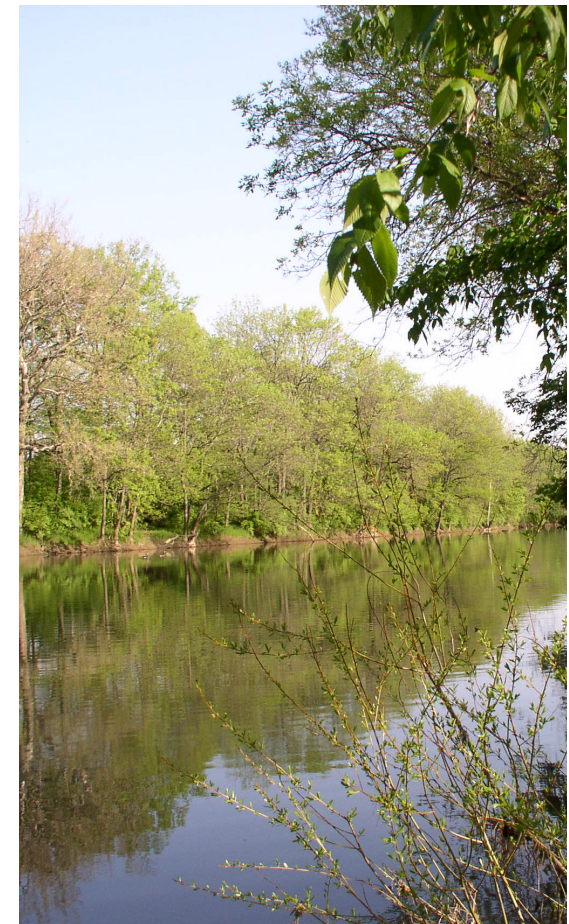
[www.franklinswcd.org](http://www.franklinswcd.org)

(614) 486-9613

Summer 2015

# Preventing Stormwater Pollution

## Easy tips for protecting local streams



[www.franklinswcd.org](http://www.franklinswcd.org)

## What We Can Do...

### ...In the Yard

**Plant grass or ground cover in areas of bare soil.** Rain can carry large amounts of soil to a storm drain or stream even on gentle slopes. Eroded soil is the major pollutant in Ohio's rivers.

**Remove grass clippings and leaves from street gutters and storm drains.** Don't toss clippings down a stream bank or in a ditch. As organic material decomposes in streams, it decreases the oxygen necessary for aquatic life.

**Utilize fertilizers and pesticides responsibly, or consider alternatives.** When using pesticides and fertilizers, read the labels and do your research to ensure proper application and timing. Apply chemicals in dry weather and water sparingly to keep them in your yard. Sweep from sidewalks and driveways back into the yard.

**Bag pet waste and throw it in the trash.** It contains nitrogen, phosphorous, and harmful bacteria and parasites which pollute our streams. Never hose it down a storm drain.



Fertilizer left on sidewalk

**Direct downspouts to a rain barrel or a rain garden instead of toward driveways, streets, or storm drains.** For information on backyard conservation, visit [www.franklinswcd.org](http://www.franklinswcd.org).

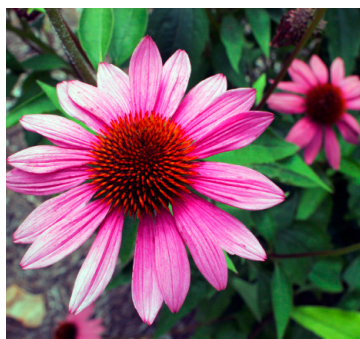
**Plant native trees, shrubs, and perennials.** Trees soak up hundreds of gallons of rainwater and native plants support pollinators and other wildlife. Native plants are also better adapted to our climate and require fewer fertilizers and pesticides.

### ...In the Garage

**Wash your car on grass or gravel, or use commercial car washes.** Commercial washes are required to recycle water and send it to a wastewater treatment plant. Water from washing your car carries soap, dirt, and grease down the storm drain to the nearest stream.

**Use a broom instead of a hose to clean parking areas.** Use kitty litter to soak up auto leaks or chemical spills, then sweep up and double bag before putting it in the trash.

**Recycle used oil.** Advance Auto Parts, AutoZone, Napa, and Jiffy Lube will accept the amount from one oil change if its put in a container with a lid.



Purple coneflower in rain garden

### ...Around the House

**Treat oil-based paint, thinners, solvents and polishes as household hazardous waste.** Latex paint is water-based, so rinse brushes in a sink. Allow extra latex paint to dry and throw the paint can in the trash.

**Store all chemicals in a dry place protected from the rain.** Household hazardous waste must be properly disposed of to prevent pollution. For collection dates and locations call (614) 871-5100 or visit [www.swaco.org](http://www.swaco.org).

**Decide if and when you need heavy-duty cleaning power.** Some household cleaners are difficult for wastewater treatment plants to remove. Phosphates in some dishwasher soaps and the anti-bacterial ingredient triclosan are examples. For 'green cleaning' tips visit *Backyard Conservation* at [www.franklinswcd.org](http://www.franklinswcd.org).

**Maintain your aerator or septic system.** Put aside a monthly "fee" so that the pumping that is necessary every three to five years will be covered. For more information, visit Franklin County Public Health at [www.myfcph.org/npdes.php](http://www.myfcph.org/npdes.php).



Oil change dumped down storm drain