



Only rain should go down
the drain.

You can play an important part in protecting our rivers' water quality

Stormwater watch

Stormwater and wastewater are two different things. Wastewater is water from indoor taps and toilets. It goes down the sewer drains inside your house to the treatment plant, where it is cleaned up before going back to the river. Stormwater, or runoff, is water that goes from your property down the street. Most stormwater eventually travels into our creeks and rivers with little or no treatment.

When it rains, it pours. Straight into the river.

Every time it rains or snow melts, the streets, driveways, parking lots and your lawn get a bath. Dirt, oil, gasoline, gravel, salt, garbage, animal droppings and chemicals such as fertilizers and pesticides are washed away into the storm drains. Ultimately, stormwater, and the pollutants within it, enters our rivers through outfalls – the big drains you see along the riverbanks.

From your home to theirs: innocent bystanders

Our rivers provide an important habitat for fish and other aquatic life. Our rivers are also our source for drinking water. They are a precious natural resource. Our everyday activities can have a big impact on natural habitats and neighbouring communities downstream. Pollution from stormwater can hurt or kill fish, birds, frogs, insects and the plants they need for food and shelter. Pollution culprits include:

- Soap from washing car in the driveway.
- Pesticides and fertilizers.
- Dirt (soil, silt and gravel).
- Automotive chemicals like motor oil, gasoline and antifreeze.
- Sidewalk salt.
- Pet waste.
- Garbage.

You have an important role in protecting our rivers, fish and our source of drinking water. Join fellow Calgarians in taking the simple actions on the reverse side of this brochure.

Actions you can take that make a difference in protecting our rivers

Use a rain barrel to collect water

for your garden. Rain barrels reduce runoff and ease the load on our water treatment plants.



Properly dispose of polluting materials

like motor oil, lawn chemicals, etc., at a designated drop-off location. Call 3-1-1 for a drop-off location near you.

Ensure your downspouts drain

onto your lawn or garden areas, not directly onto streets or alleys.



Make your yard stormwater smart

by building a water wise garden. Visit calgary.ca/waterservices to find out how.

Pollutant	Where is it coming from?	What is it doing?	What can you do?
Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dirt from bare soil, roads and parking lots. Road gravel and sidewalk sanding. Erosion and sediment from construction sites. 	Fish have trouble breathing and reproducing in murky river water caused by elevated levels of sediment.	Use a broom and dustpan to clean your sidewalk and driveway, instead of hosing debris down the storm drain.
Nitrogen (N) and Phosphorous (P)	Lawn fertilizers.	Weed growth and algal bloom decreases the level of available oxygen in waterways, killing aquatic life.	Limit the use of fertilizers and pesticides on your lawn that can be carried away by rainwater.
	Soap from washing car in driveway.		Wash your vehicle at a car wash, not in your driveway, to keep soapy water and dirt out of the storm drains.
Coliform Bacteria	Feces of wild and domestic animals.	Limits the use of waterways for recreation because of increased human health risks.	Always pick up pet waste.

