

## Protect Our Waterways from Stormwater Pollution

Stormwater runoff occurs when precipitation flows over the ground to a lake, stream, or river. Impervious surfaces such as driveways, parking lots, and buildings prevent stormwater from naturally soaking into the ground.

Foreign substances, such as debris and chemicals, are dissolved in water at the surface and transported with stormwater into streams, rivers, and other water bodies, causing pollution.

The following are examples of potential sources of stormwater pollution in your community:

- Lawn chemicals can add fertilizers and herbicides to stormwater.
- Oil drips in driveways and parking lots can be washed into stormwater.
- Septic systems may add bacteria and household chemicals.
- Any chemicals left outdoors and exposed to stormwater have the potential to pollute it.

Once pollution reaches water bodies, it can poison fish, damage ecosystems, and even end up in water used for drinking or recreation. Protecting our water bodies from all sources of contamination can be accomplished through the cooperation of citizens, government, and businesses.



### What can you do to prevent stormwater pollution?



- Sweep up debris, rather than hosing down areas.
- Clean up after your pet and dispose of pet waste in a trash container or toilet. When left outdoors, pet waste contributes bacteria and nutrients to stormwater.
- Prevent debris from entering nearby storm drains when conducting outdoor home improvement or landscaping projects.
- Clean up your property. Properly dispose of outdated or unused household chemicals stored in your basement, garage, or barn and do not store these materials outdoors.
- Recycle used oil, automotive fluids, batteries, and other products. Don't dispose of hazardous products in storm drains, alleys, or on the ground. For information on Household Hazardous Waste Disposal in Bartholomew County, please visit <http://www.bcswmd.com> or call 812-376-2614.
- Reduce the amount of fertilizers, pesticides, or other hazardous chemicals that you use. Buy only what you need so that you don't have to dispose of leftovers. Read all the labels and follow directions.
- Install rain barrels to reduce runoff from your property and conserve water.
- Consider rain gardens and native landscaping for your property.