

THE EFFECTS OF POLLUTION

Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals and people.

- Sediment can cloud the water and make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow. Sediment also can destroy aquatic habitats.
- Bacteria and other pathogens can wash into swimming areas and create health hazards, often making beach closures necessary.
- Debris (plastic bags, six-pack rings, bottles, and cigarette butts) washed into waterbodies can choke, suffocate, or disable aquatic life.
- Household hazardous wastes like insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, used motor oil, and other auto fluids can poison aquatic life. Land animals and people can become sick or die from eating diseased fish and shellfish or ingesting polluted water.
- Polluted stormwater often affects drinking water sources. This, in turn, can affect human health and increase drinking water treatment costs.



Changing ever so quickly, late summer clouds over the City and County of Broomfield.

For more information contact:

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AT WWW.EPA.GOV

FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION, REQUEST
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AFTER THE STORM

A CITIZEN'S GUIDE
TO UNDERSTANDING STORMWATER





AFTER THE STORM

STORMWATER POLLUTION SOLUTIONS

WHAT IS STORMWATER RUNOFF?

Stormwater runoff occurs when precipitation from rain or snowmelt flows over the ground. Impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, and streets prevent stormwater from naturally soaking into the ground.



WHY IS STORMWATER RUNOFF A PROBLEM?

Stormwater can pick up debris like chemicals, dirt, oils and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland, or other waterbody.

Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the waterbodies we use for swimming, fishing, and providing drinking water.



LAWN CARE

Excess fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns and gardens wash off and pollute streams. In addition, yard clippings and leaves can wash into storm drains and contribute nutrients and organic matter to streams.

- Don't over water your lawn. Consider using a drip system or soaker hose instead of a sprinkler.
- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly. When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts. Use organic mulch or safer pest control methods whenever possible.



- Compost or mulch yard waste. Don't leave it in the street or sweep it into storm drains and streams.
- Cover piles of dirt or mulch being used in landscaping projects.

PET WASTE

Pet waste can be a major source of bacteria and excess nutrients in local waters. When walking your pet, remember to pick up the waste and dispose of it properly. Leaving pet waste on the ground increases public health risks by allowing harmful bacteria and nutrients to wash into the storm drain and eventually into local waterbodies.



AUTO CARE

Washing your car and degreasing auto parts at home can send detergents and other contaminants through

the storm sewer system. Dumping automotive fluids into storm drains has the same result as dumping the materials directly into a waterbody.

- Use a commercial car wash that treats or recycles its wastewater, or wash your car on your yard so the water infiltrates into the ground.
- Repair leaks and dispose of used auto fluids and batteries at designated drop-off or recycling locations.