



Clean water – we need it to survive

Rivers, streams, creeks, ponds, lakes, reservoirs — the metro area's waterways are some of our most precious resources. They provide drinking water, recreation, and wildlife habitat. But only if the water remains clean and unpolluted.

This brochure offers ways to handle household chemicals and waste that will help prevent water pollution and keep our streams, rivers, and lakes clear and clean.

Not all pollution is intentional

We all need to do our part to protect local waterways from pollution. What you may not realize is how much water pollution is unintentional, caused by the things that we do everyday — at work, at home, at play.

The gutter in the street outside your home carries water into a network of storm drains that lead straight to local creeks and rivers. Storm drains are separate from the sanitary sewer system (which handles wastewater from your sinks, tubs, and toilets). Unlike wastewater, stormwater is not treated at a sewage treatment plant. Stormwater goes directly from the storm drainage system into local creeks and rivers.

Anything on the sidewalks and streets, such as trash, antifreeze, motor oil, pet waste, paint, or excess fertilizer, is carried away by runoff and ends up in storm drains, where it flows into rivers, lakes, and streams.

What you do makes a difference!

You might not think that you can help solve the problem, but you can! The average home can accumulate as much as 100 pounds of chemical wastes each year — from common household and lawn and garden products such as:

- ◆ Paint
- ◆ Paint thinners
- ◆ Cleaning solutions
- ◆ Degreasers
- ◆ Pesticides
- ◆ Weed killers
- ◆ Fertilizers
- ◆ Antifreeze
- ◆ Motor oil
- ◆ Gasoline

Improper use or disposal of these common household products leads to water pollution. Yard waste, such as leaves and grass clippings, and pet waste can also contribute to water pollution.

You can keep your home clean and safe and help prevent water pollution! Here's how.

Look for alternatives

Use non-toxic products

Ask retail experts about non-toxic or less toxic alternatives to your current cleaning, automotive, and lawn care products. Consider using basic products like vinegar, ammonia, and baking soda for your cleaning needs.

Read product labels

Avoid products labeled "Danger" or "Poison." Products labeled "Warning" or "Caution" are less hazardous.

Use commercial car washes

Instead of washing your car in the driveway, use your local car wash. Commercial car washes collect and filter out dirt, soap, and oil. The wash water is then cleaned and recycled.





Conserve and recycle

Buy only what you need

Avoid creating waste. Buy only the amounts that you will use right away.

Recycle

Take old or unwanted household chemicals to your local recycling centers (where available). Take advantage of local household chemical round-ups. If you change your own oil, collect all of the used oil and take it to your local oil recycling center.

Buy recycled products

Look for recycled paint, motor oil, and antifreeze.

Use and dispose of chemicals properly

Never mix chemicals

Don't mix different household chemicals together. The mixture might be harmful or toxic.

Store products safely

Store products in their original, labeled containers in a covered and secure area, away from children and pets.

Dispose of chemicals properly

Take responsibility for chemicals that you throw away. Rinse paint brushes in the sink rather than outdoors with a hose. Never pour household, automotive, or lawn and garden chemicals into the storm drains — it's illegal and it pollutes the water. For additional information on proper disposal, call the number on this brochure.

Contain yard, household, and pet waste

Keep garbage in its place

Keep garbage cans tightly covered. To avoid litter, take garbage and recyclables out to your curb only on the day your trash is picked up.



Manage yard wastes

Keep leaves, grass clippings, and other yard wastes cleared off driveways, sidewalks, and streets, so that they won't wash into storm drains.



Bag pet wastes

Pet wastes carry disease-causing organisms! Pick up after your pet. Bag pet wastes and dispose of properly in the garbage.

Remember...

Water runs downhill.

Water picks up everything.

Water flows to our rivers, streams, and creeks.

Do your part to keep our water clean!

Dumping liquid or solid waste into a storm drain or creek is a crime! If you see illegal dumping, report it!

**Broomfield
303-464-5648**

**Golden
303-384-8181**

**Wheat Ridge
303-235-2861**

**Westminster
303-430-2400 x3362**

**Jefferson County
303-271-8454**

**Arvada
720-898-7810**

**CLEAR CHOICES
FOR CLEAN WATER**



Managing Your Household Wastes

This brochure was created by and used with the permission of the City and County of Denver, the City of Aurora, the City of Lakewood and the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District.