

WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

A watershed is an area of land that drains to a stream. Each stream has its own watershed. Hills surrounding a stream form the watershed's boundaries. We all live in a watershed.



WATERSHED DIAGRAM



THE BIG PICTURE

The first step in keeping our streams clean is eliminating NPS pollutants from our watershed.



CASE STUDY

Your car leaks oil onto the street (part of the watershed). Rain washes the oil to the storm drain and local stream. If you had the only oil leak, there would be little effect on the stream, but there are likely thousands of cars leaking oil in your watershed. After rainfall, each of these oil leaks concentrates in the stream to create a significant amount of pollution.

Making small changes in the way you live can positively affect the quality of water we all use for fishing, recreation, and drinking.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Learn about NPS pollution

www.gwinnettstormwater.com

Maintain your septic system

Gwinnett Environmental Health, 770.963.5132
or www.gwinnetthealth.com

Request a Homeowner's Guide to Septic System Maintenance

Gwinnett Stormwater, 678.376.6929

Report illegal dumping to a storm drain or waterway

Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources, 678.376.7000 (24-hour line)

Stencil storm drains with the message "No Dumping - Leads to Stream"

Gwinnett Stormwater, 678.376.6929

Learn about lawn care, composting, and pesticide/fertilizer use

Gwinnett Cooperative Extension Service, 678.377.4010

Get involved protecting our water resources

Gwinnett Adopt-A-Stream, 678.376.7157

Obtain metrowide water quality information

www.cleanwatercampaign.com

Dispose of household hazardous wastes appropriately (e.g., waste oil, paint); find disposal locations

Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful, 770.822.5187 or www.gwinnettcba.org



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684 winder highway
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A Citizen's Guide to Nonpoint Source Pollution

CLEAN WATER BEGINS WITH YOU



WHAT IS NONPOINT SOURCE (NPS) POLLUTION?

NPS pollution is the greatest threat to U.S. waterways. Each of us contributes to nonpoint source pollution and each of us can prevent it. NPS pollution occurs when pollutants (e.g., oil, animal waste) are placed, spilled, or dumped on the ground. Rain washes these pollutants from the ground into local waterways via storm drains.



WHAT IS A STORM DRAIN?

Storm drains prevent flooding by moving rainwater into local waterways.



Storm drains also allow NPS pollutants access to these waterways.



Storm drains DO NOT lead to a treatment plant.



Any outside drain that collects rainwater is a storm drain (e.g., street drains, ditches).

Storm drains are located within watersheds

KEEP THESE COMMON NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTANTS OUT OF OUR STREAMS!



YARD WASTE

Compost yard waste (leaves, grass, etc). Don't blow waste into the street or storm drain.



FERTILIZERS & PESTICIDES

These products are often overused. Follow label directions. Do not apply to paved areas. Follow local regulations for waste disposal.



OIL LEAKS

Repair oil leaks from your car promptly. Recycle waste oil. Don't pour waste oil onto the ground or into a storm drain.



PET WASTE

Don't throw animal waste into the street or storm drain. Bag it and throw it away in the trash. Remember, it's your doodie!



SEPTIC SYSTEM FAILURE

Maintain your septic system. Pump the tank every three to five years. Obtain a Homeowner's Guide to Septic System Maintenance.



TRASH

Don't litter. Place all trash in bags and store in a trash can with a secure lid. Don't throw loose trash into the bed of your pickup. Cover your load.



CAR WASHING SOAP

Wash cars at a commercial car wash or on a grassy area, not your driveway.