

Clean Water is Important To All of Us

In recent years, sources of pollution like industrial wastes from factories have been greatly reduced — that's great! Now the greatest source of water pollution (60 percent) comes from everyday things like fertilizers from farms, lawns, and gardens; cars leaking oil; pet waste; residential car washing; and failing septic systems. All these seemingly harmless sources add up to a BIG pollution problem. BUT each of us can do small things to help clean up our water — and that adds up to a pollution solution!

Why Do We Need Clean Water?

Having a clean environment is of primary importance for our health and economy. Clean waterways provide recreation, commercial opportunities, fish habitat, and add beauty to our landscape. All of us benefit from clean water — and all of us play a role in keeping our lakes, rivers, wetlands, and ground waters clean.

Your actions can help
keep our water clean.
Find out how and
spread the word!



**GREATER LANSING
REGIONAL COMMITTEE**
FOR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
www.mywatersheds.org

*For more information or to learn more about
protecting our water, visit the links below or contact
the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission.*

www.MyWatersheds.org
www.PollutionIsntPretty.org

(517) 393-0342



TRI-COUNTY
regional planning commission



POLLUTION ISN'T PRETTY.

Lawn & Garden Care



What's the Problem with Fertilizer?

Fertilizer isn't a problem if it's used carefully. But if you use too much or apply it at the wrong time, it can easily wash off your lawn or garden and into storm drains. From there, it flows into our rivers, streams, wetlands, and lakes without undergoing treatment.

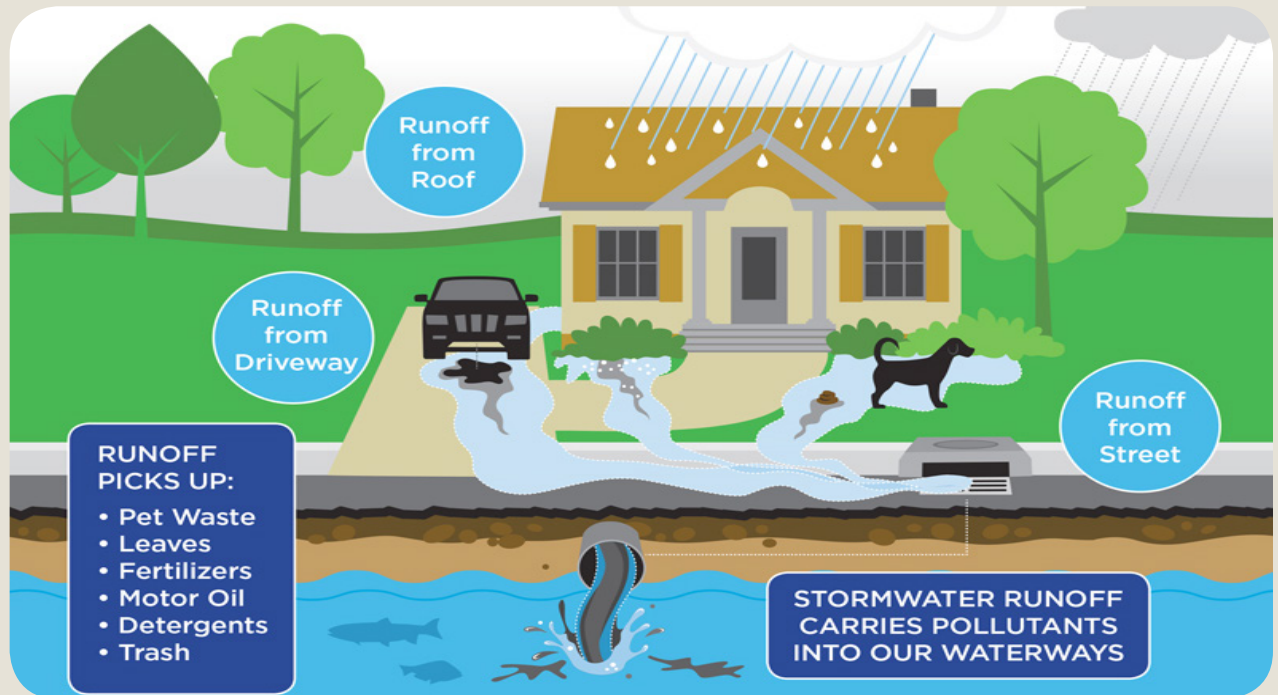
Just like in your garden, fertilizers make aquatic plants grow. But while fertilizer may help our lawns, excess phosphorus and nitrogen in waterways causes algae to grow faster than aquatic ecosystems can handle. Large algal blooms reduce oxygen levels, increase toxicity, and spur bacterial growth, making the water unsafe for human recreation and aquatic life. By properly applying and limiting usage of lawn fertilizer, you can help protect our surface water resources from nutrient pollution.



Where Do All of Those Storm Drains Lead?

Did you know that most storm drains are NOT connected to treatment plants?

The purpose of storm drains is to carry rain runoff and snowmelt away from developed areas to prevent flooding. The untreated stormwater and the pollutants it carries flow directly into our creeks, rivers, and eventually the Great Lakes. By keeping pollutants off the ground, you help keep them out of our waterways.



Help Keep Our Water Clean

- Use fertilizers and pesticides sparingly. Test the soil to determine if fertilizers are necessary, and if so, use the minimum amount needed.
- Leave grass clippings on the lawn to decompose and recycle nutrients back to the soil.
- Consider using organic fertilizers and pest control methods whenever possible.
- Use compost - your plants will need less chemical fertilizer and it puts waste to good use.
- Don't over-water your lawn and garden.
- Consider using a drip system or soaker hose instead of a sprinkler.
- Don't fertilize before a rain storm.
- Sweep up grass clippings and fertilizer from paved surfaces and properly dispose of them.
- Mulch mow, compost, or bag leaves. Keep them away from storm drains, as they can block water from flowing and increase nutrient levels in waterways when decaying.
- Install green infrastructure like rain barrels and rain gardens. Native plants do not need as much water or fertilizer.