

Stormwater Program Fact Sheet

Water Quality and You

Water in gutters, ditches, and storm drains flows directly to local creeks, streams, bays, & Puget Sound without treatment as wastewater.

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8 GOOD REASONS NOT TO POLLUTE

1—It is a violation for any person to cause the pollution of any waters of Poulsbo (Ordinance 2009-03, RCW 90.48.080 and WAC 173-201A).

2—Pollution caused by you and I, called non-point pollution, accounts for more than half of the pollution in Puget Sound. All of us contribute directly or indirectly to the non-point pollution problem and we all need to help eliminate it.

3—Water in the stormwater system flows directly to lakes, ponds, streams, bays, or to the Puget Sound and is not treated by a wastewater treatment plant.

4—Any pollutant allowed to enter streets, gutters, parking lots, storm drains, ditches or surface water can degrade water quality, which harms plants and animals that rely on the receiving water body to live.

5—Turbid (cloudy) water caused by disturbing soil and sediment can have negative environmental impacts on downstream water courses, streams and wetlands. These impacts include: reduced photosynthesis and plant growth, changes in stream bed sediments, elimination of natural food sources for trout and salmon, smothering fish eggs and physical abrasion of ash gills.

6—Lawn and garden products such as pesticides and fertilizer can be harmful to fish and aquatic organisms. If applied in excessive or improper amounts, pesticides can be toxic to fish and can contaminate drinking water. Both chemical and organic fertilizers can cause excessive plant growth in water. When these plants die, they rob the water of oxygen and this can kill fish.

7—Vehicle operation and maintenance is a source of pollutants including partially burnt fuels, leaking automobiles, improper disposal of petroleum products and vehicle cleaning or washing.

8—Phosphorus/phosphates from soap and detergents add nutrients to water bodies promoting and accelerating algae growth which depletes oxygen levels. Biodegradable products are *not* always safe for the environment – the chemicals they break down to can still be harmful.

11 GOOD WAYS TO KEEP RUNOFF CLEAN

1—Never discharge pollutants directly into streets, gutters, parking lots, storm drainage system, ditches, groundwater, surface water or onto the ground.

2—Do not use the storm drains for disposing motor oil, antifreeze, pesticides, paints, solvents or other materials. Contact the Kitsap County **Moderate Risk Waste Facility (360-337-5777)** for information on disposal of extra or unused chemicals.

3—Never pour oil on the ground for dust control. Recycle used motor oil. Contact the Moderate Risk Waste Facility for information on the nearest collection center.

4—Fix that leaky crankcase or transmission. If repair is not possible put a drip tray under the car and recycle the collected fluids.

5—Wash your car on the lawn instead of the driveway and use low phosphate soaps. Soap in limited amounts will not harm your lawn but is extremely harmful to fish and other aquatic life.

6—Follow directions on lawn/garden care products and only apply the proper amount of pesticides and fertilizers at the proper time of the year.

7—Clean up pet waste. Runoff can carry waste into the storm drainage system and waterways. Pick up pet waste and put in the garbage.

8—Drain hot tubs and swimming pools away from waterways and storm drains. Chlorinated water is deadly to fish and aquatic life and should be drained onto the ground or into domestic sewers.

9—Limit sediment leaving your property. Stabilize areas of bare soil with vegetation as soon as possible.

10—Sweep sidewalks and driveways rather than hosing debris into storm drains.

11—Compost your yard wastes. Keep grass clippings out of ravines and waterways where they will become unwanted fertilizer.

Keep this in mind...almost everywhere in Poulsbo and Kitsap County, water in gutters, ditches and storm drains flows directly to local creeks, streams, lakes, bays, and Puget Sound without wastewater treatment. Please do your part to prevent pollution. **Everyone doing a little can make a big difference.**

This information is based on Washington state and local regulations. For assistance interpreting the regulations and technical information provided by this fact sheet, call the City of Poulsbo Public Works Department at 360 • 779 • 4078.

Credits: A significant portion of the content and design of this fact sheet is courtesy of the Kitsap County Surface and Stormwater Management Program