



Public Works Stormwater Newsletter

Winter 2022

Walton County Board of County Commissioners

Stormwater Pollution Solutions

Pollution in stormwater is the result of contaminants entering stormwater runoff. These contaminants can include, but are not limited to oils, yard clippings, chemicals, and soap. Stormwater pollution can occur from a large variety of sources located throughout Walton County. Below are some examples of how stormwater pollution can occur, and ways to prevent pollution.

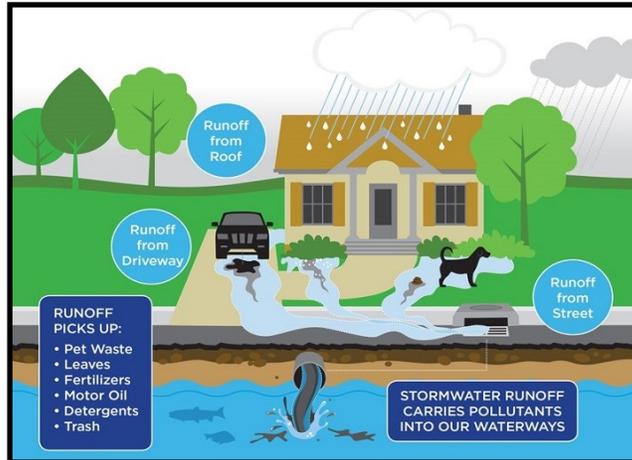


Image courtesy of City of Urbana, Illinois

Auto Care

- 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.
- Dumping automotive fluids into storm drains has the same result as dumping the materials directly into a body of water.
- Repair auto leaks and dispose of used auto fluids at automotive repair shops or County collection sites.

Pesticides and Fertilizers, Yard Waste and Excessive Dirt

- Excess fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns and gardens wash off and pollute streams. Don't over-water lawns and consider using a soaker hose instead of a sprinkler.
- Lawn clippings and leaves can wash into storm drains and contribute nutrients

and organic matter to streams. Sweep up yard debris rather than hosing down areas. When possible, collect yard waste in bags or containers for collection. Cover up piles of dirt or mulch being used in landscaping projects.

Septic Systems

- Leaking and poorly maintained septic systems release nutrients and pathogens that can be picked up by stormwater and discharged into nearby water bodies.
- Inspect your septic system every 3 years and pump your tank as necessary (every 3 to 5 years).
- Don't dispose of household hazardous waste in sinks or toilets.

Paints and Solvents

- Properly dispose of excess paints through a hazardous waste collection program. Walton County holds two Amnesty Days a year where citizens can take household hazardous wastes for disposal.

Pet Waste

- Pet waste can be a major source of bacteria and excess nutrients in local waters. When walking pets, remember to pick up the waste and dispose of it properly.

Trash

- Make sure all outside trash receptacles are covered and anchored properly. Trash can pollute ground and surface water. **DO NOT LITTER!**

Walton County Used Oil Collection Sites

- Woodyard Rd. - Next to County Fuel Tanks - 117 Montgomery Circle, DeFuniak Springs
- Walton County Landfill - 1118 Institution Rd., DeFuniak Springs
- Paxton Fire Station - 22120 U.S. Hwy 331 North, Paxton
- District 5 Road Department - 142 Community Way, Santa Rosa Beach

Did you know?

You can save 66 gallons per person per day by changing out these four plumbing fixtures to water conserving ones; toilet, showerhead, bathroom & kitchen faucet aerators. Per month, the savings comes to 2,007 gallons. Multiply this number by the number of family members and a major water savings can be achieved.

RESOURCES

Public Works:
850-892-8108

Code Enforcement:
850-622-0000

Extension/IFAS:
850-892-8172
<http://walton.ifas.ufl.edu>

Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance:
www.basinalliance.org

Rain Gardens

Rain gardens are a way for homeowners as well as businesses to participate in the reduction of polluted runoff, simply by planting a specialized garden. Rain gardens are an infiltration technique—water is captured in a garden that features native plantings, mulch, loose soil and sometimes a layer of small gravel, and the water has a chance to slowly filter into the ground rather than run off into the stormwater system. It is a popular way to reduce nonpoint source pollution and protect our lakes and streams.

What about mosquitoes? Mosquitoes need several days to lay and hatch eggs. Standing water in the garden should last for only a few hours after most storms. Mosquitoes are more likely to lay eggs in birdbaths, plant pots, and old tires. As an added benefit, the birds and dragonflies attracted to the garden will eat the mosquitoes.

So what exactly is a rain garden?

It is a sunken garden, typically 4-6 inches deep with a flat bottom. While any size does some good, they normally are about 1/3 of the size of what is draining to it—usually a roof, yard or driveway. The cost is site specific and will vary depending on the size, the plants selected and the desires of the homeowner. The Internet provides many resources and How-To Manuals, and the County Extension Office can also provide information, but here are three main steps in creating a rain garden:

1. Siting and sizing the garden-it should be at least ten feet from the house so that infiltrating water doesn't seep into the foundation.
2. Building the rain garden-this includes digging, leveling and adding a berm (or dirt "wall") on the downhill side, if necessary, to prevent water escaping the garden.
3. Planting and maintenance-use native plants for better water absorption and plant hardiness. They also require little or no fertilizers or pesticides.



Enhancing the Efficiency of a Sprinkler System

Here are some tips for improving the efficiency of your sprinkler system:

- Only water after the sun has gone down or in the early morning.
- Make sure your spray and sprinkler heads are properly adjusted to avoid watering pavements and other non-landscaped areas.
- Water areas in the shade about 30 percent less than sunny areas.
- If possible, use drip irrigation to water trees and shrubs.
- To eliminate runoff, set your clock to cycle 2-4 start times (no longer than 5 minutes each), 1 to 2 hours apart to allow water to soak into the soil. For example: water three times for 5 minutes instead of 15 minutes all at once.
- Develop a separate drip watering schedule for trees, shrubs and flower beds.
- Aerate in the spring and fall to loosen soil and reduce runoff.

Source: Irrigation Association http://www.irrigation.org/Rsrcs/default.aspx?pg=consumer_info.htm&id=140



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