

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Paints, solvents, adhesives, debris and toxic materials from home repair and remodeling are often swept, blown or washed into the Rosemead storm drain system and go untreated into channels, creeks, bays and oceans. By following a few simple steps, you can prevent pollution.

Painting:

- Use water-based paints whenever possible. Look for products labeled “latex” or “cleans with water.”
- Avoid cleaning brushes or rinsing containers in the street or gutter. For water-based paint, rinse them in the sink. For oil-based paint, clean them with thinner, which can be filtered and reused.
- Never dump paint or paint-related products in the trash, gutter or a storm drain. Take them to a household hazardous waste collection site to be recycled. You can view disposal instructions and a list of accepted materials on our site.
- Paint stripping residue, chips and dust from marine paints and paints containing lead or tributyl tin are hazardous wastes. Sweep them up and take them in a sealed container to a household hazardous waste collection site.

Construction and Remodeling:

- Schedule grading and excavation projects for dry weather.
- Practice source reduction. Order only the amount of material needed to complete the project.
- Use recycled and recyclable materials whenever possible.
- Keep all construction debris away from the street, gutter and storm drains.
- Prevent erosion and sediment runoff by covering excavated material and piles of asphalt, sand and similar materials with plastic tarp.
- Never dispose of cement washout or concrete dust into driveways, streets, gutters or storm drains.
- Recycle broken asphalt, concrete, wood and cleared vegetation. Non-recyclables should be disposed of as a hazardous waste.

For more information download our 25 page Construction Runoff Guidance Manual.

LAWNCARE AND GARDENING

Keeping lawns and gardens looking good isn't always good for our environment. Sprinkler runoff carries pesticides and fertilizers into the storm drain system. Leaves, grass clippings and yard waste get swept or blown into the street, clogging catch basins and polluting waterways. Following a few green tips is all it takes to prevent pollution.

Pesticides and Fertilizers:

- Before using, read product labels and follow the directions.
- Use non-toxic alternatives to traditional pesticides and fertilizers.
- Never apply pesticides or fertilizers before rain or near storm drains, channels, creeks or other water bodies.
- Do not over apply pesticides and fertilizers. Spot apply, rather than blanketing an entire area.
- Store pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals in a covered area to prevent runoff.
- Take unwanted pesticides and fertilizers to a household hazardous waste collection site to be recycled.

Wise Water Use:

- Control the amount of water and direction of sprinklers, to avoid waste and runoff. The average lawn requires an inch of water each week, including rainfall, or 10-20 minutes of watering. A half-inch per week is enough for fall and spring.
- Water your lawn early in the morning so water has time to soak into the soil before the heat of the sun causes evaporation. Sprinklers should be left on long enough to allow water to soak into the ground but not so long to cause runoff.
- Use drip irrigation, soaker hoses and micro spray systems, to better control the amount of water you use.
- Do not over apply pesticides and fertilizers. Spot apply, rather than blanketing an entire area.
- Periodically inspect and fix leaks and misdirected sprinklers.

Yard Waste:

- Recycle leaves, grass clippings and other yard waste, instead of blowing, sweeping or hosing them into the street or gutter.
- Try grasscycling, letting grass clippings drop on your lawn, instead of using a grass catcher. The clippings act as a natural fertilizer, returning nutrients and organic matter back to the soil, and because grass is mostly water, it also irrigates your lawn, conserving water. Reducing the need to water as often or use toxic fertilizers means less contaminated runoff from your lawn.

For more information:

► **Keeping Pest Control Products Out of Creeks, Rivers and the Ocean**

AUTOMOTIVE MAINTENANCE

Taking care of our cars takes a toll on our environment. Motor oil, filters, anti-freeze, and other toxic fluids from our cars leak, spill or are dumped into the street, flowing untreated through the storm drain system to our channels, creeks, bays and oceans. Following few environmentally-friendly tips is all it takes to prevent pollution.

Changing Your Oil and Oil Filter:

- Have your oil changed by a professional. If you do it yourself, recycle your used oil and oil filter at a certified collection center or household hazardous waste collection site.
- Buy recycled motor oil for your car. Concerned about quality or performance? Mercedes Benz, known for its standards of quality and engineering, uses recycled motor oil in all their new vehicles.
- Clean up leaks and spills with an absorbent materials such as kitty litter. Sweep and dispose.

Draining Your Radiator:

- Antifreeze, made from the chemical ethylene glycol, is extremely toxic. Drain your radiator into a drip pan to avoid spills, and take the old antifreeze in a sealed container to a household hazardous waste collection site.
- Try a less toxic alternative. Antifreeze made from propylene glycol, manufacturers claim, has a lower freezing point, a higher boiling point and lasts longer.

Washing Your Car:

- Wash your vehicle at a washing facility that reclaims wash water, preventing oil, grease and toxic fluids from washing into the street and the storm drain system.
- Use only soaps, cleaners and detergents labeled phosphate free or biodegradable. The safest products for the environment are vegetable based or citrus based soaps.
- Select a site where the wash water can soak into grass, gravel or be diverted to nearby landscaping.

PET OWNERS

During rainfall, pet and other animal waste left on lawns, beaches, trails and sidewalks can wash into storm drains. These wastes flow untreated directly into our creeks, bays and the ocean. Follow these easy steps to be a responsible pet owner and help prevent pollution.

Pick Up After Your Pet

Nearly one-third of Rosemead residents own a dog, and a lot of dog waste gets left on sidewalks and streets. More than just a nuisance, it gets into storm drains, polluting our creeks, channels, bays and the beach. But preventing this pollution is as easy as 1-2-3:

1. Bring a bag
2. Clean it up
3. Dispose of it properly, in the toilet or trash

Washing Pets

If possible, bathe your pets indoors, using less toxic shampoos, or have your pet professionally groomed. Pet shampoos and soaps, even those that are biodegradable, can be toxic to people and marine life.

Flea Control

Consider using alternatives such as oral or topical flea control products. If you use flea control products such as shampoos, sprays or collars, make sure to dispose of unused quantities properly.

HORSES AND LIVESTOCK

When conducting horse and livestock activities such as building a corral, feeding livestock or cleaning and grooming horses, follow these simple tips to prevent discharges from entering storm drains.

Facilities Design

- Site barns, corrals and other high-use areas on the portions of the property that drain away from the nearest creek or storm drain.
- Restrict animal access to creeks and streams, preferably by fencing.

- Cover and protect manure storage facilities from rainfall and surface runoff.
- Install gutters that will divert runoff away from livestock areas.

Pasture Management

- Confine animals in properly fenced areas, except during exercise and grazing.
- Animal areas should be swept or shoveled at least once a day, and not hosed down to a stream or storm drain.

Grazing Management

- During heavy rainfall, consider indoor feeding, a practice which keeps more manure under a roof and away from runoff.

Collection and Storage

- Store animal waste in a sturdy, seepage-free containment.

Use and Disposal

- Compost soiled bedding and manure. Give away composted material to local greenhouses, nurseries and botanical parks. Transport manure to topsoil companies or composting centers.

Grooming

- Use less toxic alternatives such as bacterial insecticides, diatomaceous earth insecticidal soaps, boric acid powder, horticultural oils and pyrethrin-based insecticides. When washing livestock, allow washwater to seep into the ground or conduct in an area that is routed to the sanitary sewer.