



**RESIDENT'S GUIDE
TO
STORMWATER
POLLUTION
PREVENTION**

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WHAT IS STORMWATER?

Stormwater is any runoff, surface flow, and drainage consisting of water from any form of precipitation, such as rain or snow. Impervious surfaces such as driveways, sidewalks, rooftops, and streets increase the amount of stormwater runoff by preventing stormwater from naturally soaking into the ground.

WHY IS STORMWATER RUNOFF A PROBLEM?

The most obvious problem is flooding caused by heavy rains. Additionally, stormwater runoff picks up



pollutants and debris as it flows across rooftops, lawns, and

paved surfaces. The pollutants and debris consist of dirt, sand, garbage, automotive fluids, chemicals, pet waste, pesticides, and fertilizers, amongst other constituents. This water then flows into the local stormwater pipe network and eventually into stormwater ponds, ditches, streams, lakes and rivers.

WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT STORMWATER?

Polluted stormwater runoff can harm surface waters such as lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands which in turn cause or contribute to water quality standards being exceeded.



- Excess nutrients cause algae blooms, which depletes oxygen levels and affects fish and aquatic organisms.
- Sediments cloud the water, destroying aquatic habitats.
- Bacteria and pathogens cause health hazards.
- Debris can choke or disable aquatic life.
- Household hazardous waste can poison aquatic life.

WHERE DOES MARSHALL'S STORMWATER GO?

The stormwater within city limits flows into one of two watersheds: the Redwood River Watershed or the Cottonwood River Watershed. Both watersheds are part of the Minnesota River Basin, which means it ultimately drains to the Minnesota River.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- Maintain a healthy lawn or otherwise established and vegetated property. This will help prevent soil erosion and promote the infiltration of water on your property.
- Use phosphorus-free fertilizers. Excess phosphorus encourages algae growth in ponds, streams, and lakes.
- Apply proper amounts of fertilizer and sweep fertilizer from paved surfaces. Excess fertilizers may be washed off your property with runoff and into nearby streets and storm sewer systems.
- Do not place and leave materials such as soils, mulch, or gravels on impervious surfaces such as streets, driveways, and sidewalks. When it rains, these materials will be washed into nearby storm sewer systems.
- Sweep up any sediments deposited on impervious surfaces. Keep your leaves and grass clippings off streets and other paved surfaces. Leaves and grass clippings contain nutrients that may pollute our waterways.



- Where possible, direct runoff into vegetated areas. This includes directing your home gutter downspouts to your lawn surface or other vegetated area.
- Install a rain barrel to intercept roof water drainage.
- Pick up pet waste and dispose of properly. Pet waste contains phosphorus that is carried with runoff during rainfall events.
- Wash your vehicle at a car wash or on permea-



surfaces. Using a commercial car wash is the best way to avoid flushing contaminants such as oil, grease, metals, detergents, and phosphorus into our stormwater systems and ultimately into our rivers and lakes.

- Regularly maintain your vehicle to prevent loss of fluids.
- Prevent erosion on your property. When soil is left bare, rain water will run quickly over picking up soil particles and washing them into storm drains. Seed all disturbed areas as soon as possible.
- Don't dump garbage, debris, or dirty water into storm drains.
- 15°F and below is too cold for salt. Most salts stop working at this temperature.



- Shovel. The more snow and ice you remove manually, the less salt you'll have to use and the more effective it can be. A coffee mug full of salt (about 12 ounces) is all you need for an average-sized driveway or sidewalk area. Consider using a hand-held spreader to apply salt consistently, and use salt only in critical areas.



WHY MUST THE CITY MANAGE STORMWATER QUALITY?

Many cities are mandated by Congress under the EPA's Clean Water Act to reduce stormwater pollution to surface waters and groundwater. The City is required to operate with a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit (MS4 Permit) that contains a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program. More information about this program is available on the city website.

WHAT IS THE CITY DOING?

The City of Marshall operates and maintains an extensive stormwater system consisting of curb and gutter, ditches, piping, and ponding. This system helps to convey and treat stormwater runoff. The City also engages in public education, construction site reviews and inspections, street sweeping, catch basin cleaning, and many other system management and maintenance duties to aid in the effort of reducing stormwater pollution.