

Background of REHS

Rutgers Environmental Health and Safety (REHS) supports Rutgers University by providing comprehensive and professional health, safety, and environmental services to the university community. REHS has collaborated with the School of Communication Information and Library Studies (SCILS) to promote environmental protection through public education and awareness campaigns. The target audiences for this campaign are New Brunswick and Piscataway area university students.

The educational campaigns focus primarily on the impact that storm water runoff has on the New Brunswick and Piscataway water systems. Runoff can be polluted by common contaminants, such as motor oil and grease, pesticides and fertilizers, litter, and animal waste. This polluted runoff can harm drinking water supplies, beaches, lakes, recreational areas, and wildlife. The campaign's overall goal is to inform the university community about the hazardous effects of storm water pollution and to encourage behavioral changes among students, faculty, and staff. For additional information visit the REHS website at rehs.rutgers.edu.

You can help!
Be **aware** and
take **action**.



Rutgers Environmental Health and Safety



Facts about Storm Water Pollution

Rutgers Environmental Health and Safety

Rutgers, The State University of NJ
74 Street 1603
Piscataway, NJ
Phone: (848) 445-2550

rehs.rutgers.edu | njstormwater.org

SUPPORTING TODAY, ENVISIONING TOMORROW.

The Three A's of Storm water Pollution Control

Be **aware** of your part in storm water runoff.

Take **action** and change habits that can make a difference in our waterways.

Notice **activities** that may adversely affect drainage ways, creeks, and lakes.

Automobile Fanatics: *Did you know?*

Washing vehicles and equipment has the potential for contaminating receiving waters through the discharge of grit, oil, and even soap used to wash your car. Soapy or oily vehicle wash waters must either be collected for off-site disposal or discharged to a sanitary sewer, if allowed by the local sewer authority.

- Consider using a commercial car wash if your facility or home is not properly equipped to dispose of wash water that contains detergents and oils.
- Clean up spilled brake fluid, oil, grease, and antifreeze. Do not hose these into the street where they can eventually reach local streams and lakes.
- Do not dispose of used oil, antifreeze, paints, and other household chemicals properly, storm sewers or drains. If your community does not have a program for collecting household hazardous wastes, ask your local government to establish one.

Gardeners: *Did you know?*

Lawn and garden chemicals are not environmentally friendly and end up in lakes, rivers, and streams if not disposed of properly. Leaves and grass clippings add unnecessary nutrients to our water bodies, contribute to harmful algae bloom, and kill marine life.

- Apply pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers sparingly and according to directions.
- Never apply chemicals when heavy rain is forecast.
- Control soil erosion on your property by planting ground cover and stabilizing erosion-prone areas.
- Cover piles of dirt or mulch being used in landscape projects so to avoid washing these materials into storm drains. Sweep up work areas prior to anticipated storms.

Pet Lovers: *Did you know?*

Pet waste contains harmful bacterial pollutants and nutrients, which put our water bodies at risk.

- When walking your pet, pick up and dispose of waste properly. If available, utilize "Pet Station" or "dogipot" waste disposal systems.
- Keep pet waste out of street gutters and storm drains. These outlets drain directly into lakes, streams, rivers, and wetlands.

Homeowners: *Did you know?*

Impervious surfaces such as roofs, driveways, and street pavement prevent precipitation from entering the ground and groundwater—a necessary stage in the water cycle. If precipitation cannot penetrate impervious surfaces, pollutants such as oil and grease from driveways, fertilizers/pesticides, and even septic waste can end up in streams, lakes, and rivers.

- Keep litter, pet wastes, leaves, and debris out of street gutters and storm drains. These outlets drain directly to lake, streams, rivers, and wetlands.
- Do not dispose of used oil, antifreeze, paints, and other household chemicals properly, storm sewers or drains. If your community does not already have a program for collecting household hazardous wastes, ask your local government to establish one.
- Encourage local government officials to develop construction erosion/sediment control ordinances in your community.
- Have your septic system inspected and pumped, at a minimum, every 3-5 years so that it operates properly.
- Purchase low phosphorous household detergents and cleaners to reduce the amount of nutrients discharged into our lakes, streams, and coastal waters.