

Stormwater: Drinkable!

Stormwater Runoff: Drinkable?

Bottoms Up!

Yard Waste

Grass clippings, fertilizers, and leaves contain nitrogen and phosphorus, which causes algae blooms, blocks sunlight, reduces oxygen in water, kills fish, and encourages carp growth. And, pesticides kill aquatic life.

Pet Waste

Contains harmful bacteria.



Motor Oil

Contains heavy metals and reduces oxygen in water.

Litter

Degrades water quality and habitat.

Soil

Fills spaces between rocks and stream bottoms reducing fish spawning habitat.

Ten Tips for Protecting Our Water

How about a nice, tall glass of yard waste? Or motor oil? Or litter, soil, or pet waste?

Yuck! But that's what ends up in our lakes and groundwater if residents aren't more conscientious.

The City of Baxter is trying to increase awareness that stormwater runoff isn't just rain. It contains all the pollutants that stormwater collects as it travels over rooftops, streets, parking lots, and lawns. All those materials then end up in local lakes, streams, and wetlands.

Contaminated or polluted stormwater can lead to all sorts of water quality problems – algae blooms, depleted oxygen levels on lakes, cloudy water that makes it difficult for aquatic plants to grow, hazardous swimming conditions, poisoned aquatic life, polluted drinking water and more.

So what can the average citizen do to reduce stormwater pollution? Follow these 10 tips from the City:

1. Recycle your used motor oil. Take household hazardous wastes to drop-off points. Use a proper container for your trash and recyclables. Do not put trash into the street or gutter where it can be washed into the storm sewer system. Never pour hazardous materials into a storm drain.
2. Properly manage and dispose of yard wastes (grass clippings, leaves, etc.) and do not put them in the street, gutter, ditch or storm drain. Aerate your lawn. Where possible, direct runoff into vegetated areas. Install a "rain barrel."
3. Limit the amount of impervious surface on your property. Use porous paving surfaces such as wood decking and pavement/block that allows water to soak into the ground.
4. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when using pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers on your lawn or garden. Use phosphorus-free fertilizer.
5. If you have a dog, clean up its waste and do not allow it to pollute storm water runoff. You can properly dispose of pet waste by flushing it down the toilet or placing it in the trash for regular pickup.
6. Use water-based paints such as latex and wash paint brushes in the sink with water. When using paint thinner, reuse and recycle it.
7. Regularly maintain your car and fix any oil, radiator or transmission leaks as soon as you see them. Also, consider using a commercial car wash instead of washing at home. The runoff from home car washing can contain detergents that are harmful to aquatic life.
8. Use non-toxic alternatives to conventional household cleaners wherever possible.
9. Educate your family, friends and neighbors about stormwater pollution. Spread the word.
10. If you see a potential stormwater quality problem or violation, call the City of Baxter at (218) 454-5115.