WHAT IS STORMWATER?
Stormwater runoff occurs when precipitation from rain or snowmelt flows over the ground. It is critical to allow clean stormwater runoff to soak into the ground to replenish drinking water supplies. Impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, and streets prevent stormwater from naturally soaking into the ground.

WHY IS STORMWATER A THREAT TO DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES?
Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants and carry them into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river or wetland. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the waterbodies we use for swimming, fishing, and providing drinking water. Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals, and people.

The Township is working cooperatively with homeowners to implement stormwater preventive measures to help protect drinking water supplies. Treating drinking water is becoming increasingly expensive so keeping groundwater and surface waters clean saves money and keeps you safe and healthy.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IN YOUR OWN HOMES AND YARDS TO PROTECT DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES?

Vehicle and Garage

• Use a commercial car wash or wash your car on a lawn or other unpaved surface to minimize the amount of dirty, soapy water flowing into the storm drain and eventually into your local waterbody.

• Check your car, boat, motorcycle, and other machinery and equipment for leaks and spills. Make repairs as soon as possible. Clean up spilled fluids with an absorbent material like kitty litter or sand, and don't rinse the spills into a nearby storm drain. Remember to properly dispose of the absorbent material.

• Recycle used oil and other automotive fluids at participating service stations. Don't dump these chemicals down the storm drain or dispose of them in your trash.

Lawn and Garden

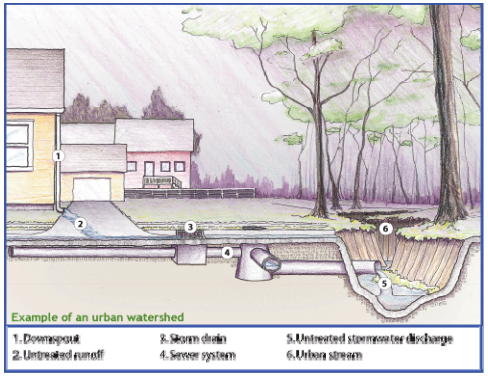
• Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly. When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts. Avoid application if the forecast calls for rain; otherwise, chemicals will be washed into your local stream.

• Select native plants and grasses that are drought resistant. Native plants require less water, fertilizer, and pesticides.

• Sweep up yard debris, rather than hosing down areas. Compost or recycle yard waste when possible.

• Don't over water your lawn. Water during the cool times of the day, and don't let water run off into the storm drain.

• Cover piles of dirt and mulch being used in landscaping projects to prevent these pollutants from blowing or washing off your yard and into local waterbodies. Vegetate bare spots in your yard to prevent soil erosion.



Home Repair and Improvement

• Before beginning an outdoor project, locate the nearest storm drains and protect them from debris and other materials.

• Sweep up and properly dispose of construction debris such as concrete and mortar.

• Use hazardous substances like paints, solvents, and cleaners in the smallest amounts possible, and follow the directions on the label. Clean up spills immediately, and dispose of the waste safely.

• Purchase and use nontoxic, biodegradable, recycled, and recyclable products whenever possible.

• Clean paint brushes in a sink, not outdoors. Filter and reuse paint thinner when using oil-based paints. Properly dispose of excess paints through a household hazardous waste collection program, or donate unused paint to local organizations.

• Reduce the amount of paved area and increase the amount of vegetated area in your yard. Use native plants in your landscaping to reduce the need for watering during dry periods.

Consider directing downspouts away from paved surfaces onto lawns and other measures to increase infiltration and reduce polluted runoff.

Pet Care

• When walking your pet, remember to pick up the waste and dispose of it properly. Leaving pet waste on the ground increases public health risks by allowing harmful bacteria and nutrients to wash into the storm drain and eventually into local waterbodies.

WHERE CAN I GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

Detailed information can be obtained by visiting the MPCA Stormwater website at http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/stormwater/index.html

WHAT IS STORMWATER?

WHY IS STORMWATER A THREAT TO OUR DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES?

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