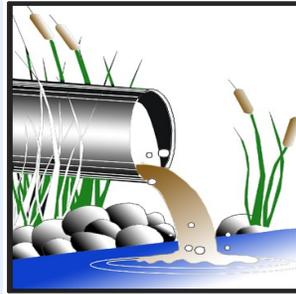


# Stormwater Management and You



## Stormwater: What is it?

Do you know where the water goes when it rains? What about the water you use to wash your car or water your lawn? Some of this water soaks into the ground but the rest of it runs off the land surface. It is this runoff water that we call stormwater. Stormwater, by itself, is not harmful to our environment. As it travels, however, stormwater picks up a variety of pollutants, trash and debris that all end up in the nearest storm drainage inlet which, ultimately, drains into a nearby waterway *untreated*.

These pollutants can harm fish, wildlife and plants, contaminate drinking water, and even clog the storm drainage system, which contributes to flooding. Some of these pollutants come from everyday actions, such as over fertilizing your lawn or washing your car on the pavement. Some may be due to deliberate or careless actions, such as emptying motor oil into the street or parking lot or washing down a spill of gasoline, oil, antifreeze, or any other chemical into the storm drain.

## **\$**Stormwater Fee:

In compliance with Federal and State regulations, the City of Portsmouth implemented a stormwater management program to reduce stormwater pollution and improve water quality in our municipal storm drainage system, which ultimately drains to state waterways. The Stormwater Management Program is funded by the Stormwater Utility.

The rate structure is the same for all properties in the City. The rate is based on impervious area as a measure of each property's contribution to stormwater runoff. Impervious area is any surface which is not penetrable by water and is measured in Equivalent Residential Units (ERUs). The average impervious area for residential properties in the City of Portsmouth is represented by one ERU, which is calculated as 1,877 square feet.

## Stormwater Management in Portsmouth

**P**rogram activities include: maintenance of existing facilities, water quality monitoring and testing, lake and pond management, construction of stormwater management facilities, illicit discharge investigation, enforcement of program standards, federally mandated activities & reporting requirements, and public education.

### Ways YOU can reduce Stormwater Pollution



**Scoop the poop!** Pet waste increases levels of bacteria within waterways leading to water pollution and fish kills.

**Don't over fertilize!** Apply lawn and garden chemicals sparingly and according to directions. Excess chemicals wash off during rainstorms and cause an overabundance of algae in the nearest waterway, resulting in fish kills.



**Bag that grass!** Grass clippings and leaves should be raked, bagged and disposed of in the trash, composted, or spread on your lawn. If dumped in waterways, they contribute to excess nutrients that result in algae blooms and fish kills.

**No dumping allowed!** Dispose of used brake fluid, oil, antifreeze, grease, paints, and other household chemicals properly, not in storm drains or down sinks or toilets. Take them to the regional landfill on Route 58.



**Contain those spills!** If you spill brake fluid, oil, grease or antifreeze, don't hose it into the street where it can eventually reach local streams and lakes. Pour kitty litter on the spill and, after it absorbs, sweep it up and put it in the trash.

**If you see it, report it!** Citizens are often our biggest eyes and ears. If you see someone polluting the storm drain, report it! The number to call is **(757) 393-8666**.



For additional information please call the Department of Public Works at (757) 393-8666 or visit us online at [www.portsmouthva.gov](http://www.portsmouthva.gov)

