

You Can Help!

The Hoosic River Watershed Association (HooRWA) is teaching people easy ways to stop storm drain pollution where it starts—in our own neighborhoods and backyards.

YOU can help keep our waterways clean by attaching HooRWA's "Don't Pollute—Drains to Waterways" decals on storm drains in your neighborhood. This message will remind people that only water should enter storm drains.



You can continue this work by starting a stream stewardship group or becoming a water quality monitoring volunteer with HooRWA.

To find out more, contact us at 413-458-2742 or office@hoorwa.org.

Important!

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is notifying towns that are required to develop a stormwater education and outreach program under the Clean Water Act Phase II Stormwater Regulations. HooRWA's Storm Drain Awareness program contributes to fulfillment of those requirements.

About HooRWA

The Hoosic River Watershed Association is a non-profit citizens' group. We promote the restoration, conservation, and enjoyment of the Hoosic River and its watershed through education, stewardship, and advocacy.

For information about our programs, to become a member, or to volunteer, contact us at 413-458-2742 or office@hoorwa.org



A healthy river is good for everyone

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**Housatonic Valley Association
And the Town of Adams, MA**

Adams Community Development Department



Hoosic River Watershed Association

Help Keep Our Waterways Clean!



Did You Know?

Nearly everyone thinks that water pollution is caused by industry. In the past, much of it was. But today **the #1 threat to rivers and ponds is from storm water runoff**. Much of this runoff

carries untreated pollutants from roads, lawns, construction sites, and other areas. And polluted runoff enters the river through storm drains.

What are storm drains?

Storm drains are the holes, with a grate over them, seen on city and suburban streets along the curb. They are also on the side of major roads, bridges, and highways, and in parking lots.

They lead to underground pipes which carry water, usually to a stream or pond.



What is runoff?

When rain falls or snow and ice melt, the water usually soaks into the ground or evaporates.



BUT when the water meets hard surfaces like roofs, paved parking lots, streets, and driveways, it flows across them as runoff, traveling into gutters and down into storm drains—

which carry it into nearby rivers and ponds.

How does runoff become polluted?

As water flows down streets and across parking lots and lawns it picks up pollutants such as—

Yard trash like pet wastes and grass clippings;

Fluids that leak from cars and trucks such as oil, gas, and antifreeze;

Litter of all kinds, including waste paper, bottles and cans;

Fertilizers and pesticides;

Sand, salt, and soil from roads, paved driveways, or construction sites.



How can polluted runoff harm rivers and ponds?



Runoff is usually NOT TREATED to remove pollutants. It carries pollution directly into storm drains, rivers and

ponds. Thousands of storm drains in the Hoosier River watershed carry hundreds of thousands of gallons of runoff—with motor oil, gasoline, pet waste, pesticides, fertilizers, paints and detergents—straight into our rivers, ponds and wetlands!

Some people even dump trash and other substances right into storm drains. These contaminants destroy water ecosystems, killing fish, frogs, and plant life and making the water unsafe for us too.



12 Easy Ways You Can STOP Storm Drain Pollution

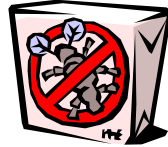
1. Use less fertilizer

Many lawns need as little as one-half of the fertilizer recommended on fertilizer bags. And too much makes your lawn more susceptible to diseases and pests.



2. Use less pesticide, less often

All pesticides, even “natural” ones, are poisons. Some that seem safe around your home are lethal in the environment. For example, rotenone is extremely toxic to fish. Use pesticides sparingly. Follow label directions exactly. Prepare and use only what is absolutely necessary.



3. Compost yard waste

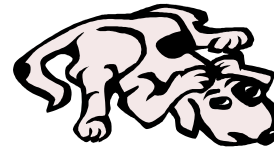
Grass clippings, leaves and garden trimmings can block storm drains. They also use up oxygen in the water, leaving less for fish and other aquatic life. Compost your clippings, leaves, and weeds—it's free fertilizer.

4. Don't litter

Garbage and trash in storm drains foul our waterways and can harm wildlife. Some litter breaks down so slowly that it can remain in a river for centuries.

5. Properly dispose of pet waste

It's raw sewage! Dispose of it far from all water sources and storm drains.



6. Recycle oil and antifreeze

Take used motor oil and antifreeze to your local recycling center. Repair fluid leaks in cars, trucks, and other motorized equipment.

7. Take hazardous materials to proper collection sites



Contact your town hall to find out where to take leftover paint, pesticides, cleaners, drain openers, and other hazardous household materials.

8. Wash your car on the lawn with vegetable soaps

On the lawn, water soaks into the soil instead of running off your driveway. Vegetable-based soap helps your lawn by inhibiting many pests and diseases.

9. Limit sand and salt use

Don't compromise your safe footing—just don't overdo it. Salt can spoil drinking water supplies and sand can run into waterways and destroy fish habitat.

10. Catch the rain



Rain barrels on your gutter downspout, or rain gardens in low patches of lawn, keep usable water on your property instead of sending it down a storm drain.

11. Reduce your paving

Wherever possible, choose gravel, perforated bricks, or turf over solid pavement. Give rain and meltwater a chance to percolate.

12. Spread the word

Most storm drain pollution is caused by the actions of uninformed people. Share what you know!



