

Save money and avoid the problem of disposing unneeded or unused household hazardous waste!

Consider reducing your purchase of products that contain hazardous ingredients. Learn about the use of alternate methods or products without hazardous ingredients for some household needs. Some household cleaner recipes can be found at www.ecocycle.org/hazwaste/recipes.cfm

If the use of hazardous substances cannot be avoided, please follow these tips to avoid any possible risks:

- Use and store products carefully.
- Keep in original containers and do not remove labels. Never store in food containers.
- Never mix leftovers with other products. Incompatible products might react, ignite or explode.
- Follow any instructions for use and disposal provided on product labels.



What is Household Stormwater Pollution?

Household stormwater pollution happens when contaminants from our homes and cars go down the storm drain. This can happen through illegal dumping into storm drains, or more commonly, when rainwater washes pollutants and other debris from our yards and driveways to the storm drain and into our streams, lakes, and wetlands. Common sources of household pollution are motor oil and antifreeze left on driveways, soapy water from car washing, fertilizers and pesticides in lawns and pet waste left in yards.

What You Can Do

You can protect our water quality by following the simple, but effective, steps outlined in this brochure.

It's Up to You!

Your actions make a difference! You have a direct impact on the health of our streams, lakes, ponds, groundwater, and reservoirs.

Wachusett Reservoir Watershed

Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Water Supply Protection
180 Beaman Street
West Boylston, MA 01583
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www.mass.gov/dcr/watersupply.htm

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dcr
Massachusetts



Household Stormwater Pollution Prevention



Practical steps to stop pollution from entering storm drains in the Wachusett Reservoir watershed that flow untreated to lakes, streams, wetlands, and reservoirs.

Around the House

Properly dispose of household chemicals.

Never wash or pour chemicals, cleaners, or solvents into the storm drain, or down any drains in your home. It is toxic to aquatic life and it is also illegal. Take antifreeze, solvents, gas, brake fluid, and other hazardous substances to an approved disposal location.

Residents of Boylston, Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling, and West Boylston can take household oil-based paint and chemicals to the **Wachusett Regional Recycling Center Household Paint and Chemical Collection** event held four times a year at the facility in West Boylston. Check www.wachusettearthday.org or local newspapers for collection dates, fees, and directions.

Some of the materials accepted include: paint thinners, varnishes, solvents, strippers, pesticides, herbicides, kerosene, gasoline, swimming pool chemicals, aerosols, photo chemicals, chemistry sets, oven and drain cleaners, motor oil, and antifreeze. Contact Wachusett Earthday for a complete list of accepted items.



Sweep your driveway. Sweep up debris instead of hosing off or pressure washing your driveway. Not only is the sediment harmful, but there can also be residue from vehicles on the driveway.

Working on Vehicles

Wash your car on a lawn or at a licensed facility.

Car wash water contains dirt, road grime, heavy metals, oils and soaps that are toxic to fish and aquatic life. Sending soap runoff down the driveway and into a storm drain is not only harmful to the environment; it could be a violation of local, state and/or federal laws.

Maintain your vehicle. The liquids from leaky cars are harmful to aquatic life and are washed directly into the storm drain every time it rains. Test to see if your vehicle is leaking by placing clean cardboard on the ground under your engine and checking it the next day. Repair all leaks as soon as they are discovered.

Properly dispose of oil and other auto waste at an approved waste facility.

Don't pour liquids down the drain.

Clean up Spills. Use kitty litter, sawdust, or commercial absorbent pads to dry up any spilled liquid, then sweep it up and place it in the garbage. Don't wash it into the street or storm drain.

In the Lawn & Garden

Pick up after your pets. Rainwater can wash bacteria and parasites from pet waste into the storm drain, which flows untreated into our natural waterways.

Use organic, time-release fertilizers. These fertilizers slowly release nutrients to your lawn, reducing the amount of pollutants washed into our waterways.

Avoid pesticides and herbicides when possible. Not only is it better for the health of our lakes and streams, but it is also better for the health of your family. If you must use pesticides, use them sparingly and only where needed to ensure excess will not be washed into the storm drain. Always follow the label directions.

Dispose of yard waste properly.

Compost yard debris or have it hauled away. Yard debris can release excess nutrients, which promotes algae growth in waterways.

Use a mulching mower. You can decrease your use of fertilizers by 25 percent by using a mulching lawnmower.

Around the Neighborhood

Pick up litter. Clean up any trash to reduce the chance of litter or contaminants entering the stormwater system.

Report pollution. It is illegal to dump chemicals or other materials in the storm drain. If you notice illegal dumping, or see, hear about, or even suspect activity that you believe is against the law and placing people's health or natural resources at risk, contact the MA Environmental Strike Force at: 1-888-VIOLATE (1-888-846-5283).

Educate neighbors. Share the importance of adopting stormwater pollution prevention practices with your neighbors.