



Stormwater Pollution: Ten Simple Ways You Can Help

Water from rain or melting snow that does not soak into the ground poses a risk to the quality of groundwater and surface water in Michigan. As it flows off lawns, driveways, and streets this water collects contaminants that are deposited into nearby waterways without being treated. Sediments, organic matter, bacteria, and toxic chemicals cloud the water, cause excess algae growth, harm wildlife, and make beaches unsafe for swimming. Preventing these contaminants from entering Michigan's lakes, streams, and rivers starts with you. Here are ten simple things you can do to help.

1. Direct downspouts away from paved surfaces. Consider planting a rain garden to collect excess runoff.
2. Reseed bare patches in your lawn. Mulch lightly to prevent soil erosion until grass is established.
3. Clean up pet waste. Bury it or dispose of it in the trash.
4. Sweep up grass clippings and leaves from driveways and sidewalks. Compost yard waste.
5. Don't dump oil, paint, or other hazardous materials into storm drains, ditches, or on the ground.
6. Wash your car over the grass, not in the driveway.
7. Set up a rain barrel to collect stormwater from your roof. Use the water to irrigate your lawn and garden.
8. Use salt and deicers sparingly. Shovel as soon as snow stops falling to prevent ice build-up.
9. Properly store pesticides, fertilizers and other hazardous chemicals off the ground in a secondary container. Clean up spills immediately.
10. Keep cars tuned up and repair leaks. Collect used oil, antifreeze, and other fluids to be recycled at a nearby service station.

For more information about these tips or how you can further reduce stormwater pollution from your property, contact the Muskegon Conservation District at 231-773-0008.

