

What is Stormwater runoff?

Stormwater runoff occurs when rain or snowmelt flows over the ground. Impervious surfaces such as driveways, sidewalk, and streets prevent stormwater from naturally soaking into the ground.

Why is Stormwater pollution a problem?

Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants and flow into the storm sewer system which then flows into the Red River. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is untreated and discharged into water bodies we use for swimming, fishing, and drinking supply.

The effects of pollution

Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on lakes, rivers, and streams; as well as plants, fish, animals, and people.



- ◆ Household hazardous wastes like pesticides, paint cleaners, solvents, used motor oil, and other automotive fluids can poison aquatic life and pollute the drinking water supply.
- ◆ Sediment from unfinished or disturbed yards can transport pollutants into water bodies. Naturally occurring phosphorous found in soils is a nutrient pollutant. Sediment also can destroy aquatic habitats by clouding the water, making it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow.
- ◆ Excess nutrients can cause algae blooms. When algae die, they sink to the bottom and decompose in a process that removes oxygen from the water. Fish and other aquatic organisms can't exist in water with low dissolved oxygen levels.
- ◆ Debris such as plastic bags, bottles, and cigarette butts get washed into the Red River and can choke, suffocate, or disable aquatic life such as ducks, fish, turtles, and birds.
- ◆ Bacteria and other pathogens in pet waste can wash into swimming areas and create health hazards.

Stormwater Pollution Solutions

Many routine activities conducted at your home can have significant negative impacts on the Red River. Through simple measures at home, you can help protect our natural resources.

Lawn Care



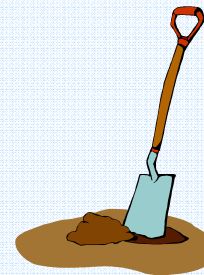
Excess fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns and gardens wash off and pollute streams and rivers. In addition yard clippings and leaves can wash into storm drains and contribute nutrients and

organic matter to waterways.

- ◆ Don't over water your lawn.
- ◆ Use phosphorous free pesticides and fertilizers, and only in recommended amounts. Use organic mulch or safer pest controls whenever possible. Sweep up excessive fertilizer from driveways, sidewalks and streets.
- ◆ Compost or mulch yard waste.
- ◆ Sweep leaves, grass, and other debris into the trash, and avoid washing these materials into the street or storm drain.

Residential Landscaping

Erosion from single family residential lots individually may not pose a very significant risk; however, numerous residential lots, as found in most subdivisions, can cause excessive amounts of sediment and debris to be carried into the storm sewer system.

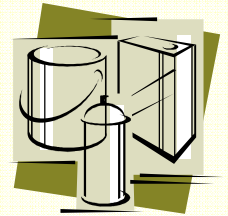


The water that enters the storm sewer system does not get treated at the wastewater treatment plant; it drains into the Red River

- ◆ Do not place piles of soil, mulch, or other landscaping materials in the street or on sidewalks.
- ◆ Cover or provide erosion and sediment controls devices on landscaping material stockpiles.
- ◆ Sweep up work areas prior to storm events to prevent materials being washed into the storm sewer system.

Household Hazardous Waste

Many commonly used household products can be hazardous to the environment, as well as people and pets, if they are improperly disposed.



- ◆ Always use and store the product according to the instructions.
- ◆ Keep chemicals in the original container or properly labeled.
- ◆ Take old or excess products to the Clay County Hazardous Waste Facility.
- ◆ Buy only what you intend to use. If you have some leftover, check and see if anyone you know can use it before bringing it to the Clay County Hazardous Waste Facility.

Automotive Care

Washing your car and degreasing automobile parts at home can send detergents, oils, and other automotive fluids into the storm sewer system. Dumping automotive fluids such as oils, gasoline, and coolants into storm

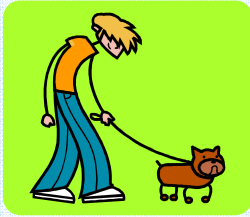


drains or onto the ground has the same effect as dumping them directly into the Red River.

- ◆ Use commercial car washes that treat or recycle their wastewater, or wash your car in your yard so the water infiltrates into the ground.
- ◆ Have routine maintenance performed on your vehicle to prevent leaks. When leaks are found, have them repaired immediately. Properly clean up fluids that have leaked.
- ◆ Properly dispose of automotive fluids. Utilize the Clay County Hazardous Waste Facility for fluid disposal.
- ◆ Utilize commercial oil change companies and auto part stores who will accept your used motor oil.

Pet Waste

Pet waste can be a major source of bacteria and excess nutrients in local waters.



- ◆ When walking your pet, properly pick up and dispose of waste.

Leaving pet waste on the ground increases health risks by allowing harmful bacteria and nutrients to wash into the storm sewer system and eventually end up in the Red River.

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STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION



**WHAT YOU CAN DO
TO HELP.**

24 Hour Stormwater Hotline
218.299.5386