

Jefferson County Department of Storm Water Management



Commissioner David Carrington, President
 Commissioner George Bowman
 Commissioner Sandra Little Brown
 Commissioner Joe Knight
 Commissioner Jimmie Stephens

Tony Petelos, County Manager
 Zhaleh M. McCullers, Director

Pollution Prevention Week Special Edition

JeffCo H₂O News

Pollution Prevention Week September 15 - 21

Many people think that most water pollution in our rivers, creeks, lakes and streams comes from businesses and industries. It might be surprising to learn that the number one source of water pollution in the United States is polluted stormwater runoff, and that it's the result of each of us going about our everyday activities at home, work and play!

Making the connection between our actions and the water pollution it can cause is an important first step in doing the things that will help protect and improve local water quality. One often overlooked source of water pollution is what we keep around our homes and on our property. Household products such as fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, paint, pool chemicals or cleaners that are stored outside should always be kept tightly sealed in watertight containers and if possible, off the ground and sheltered from rain. Not only will proper storage protect your investment in these products, it also will prevent stormwater from washing them into local waterways.

Each year, the importance of Pollution Prevention – also known as P2 – is recognized and encouraged during the third full week of September. This year P2 is September 15-21. Having a week set aside for pollution prevention is a great reminder to identify potential pollutants that are lurking around your property and home. Take a few minutes to survey your outdoor areas to detect any possible sources of pollution, and take some stormwater friendly action to prevent these pollutants from leaving your property when it rains.

But the outdoor areas of your home are not the only potential sources of stormwater pollution. You may want to check out some other helpful [P2 tips](#) for home, work, and on the road from the EPA.

Keep It Under Cover!



Keep household products and chemicals tightly covered and stored indoors whenever possible. If you must store these products outside and do not have a covered area to protect them from the elements, consider investing in waterproof containers with lids to eliminate possible exposure to rain.

P2 Checklist for Outside the Home

Take a few minutes to survey your property to identify potential sources of polluted runoff. Here are some easy P2 solutions to prevent the exterior areas of your home from contributing to water pollution:

Potential Pollution	Easy Solution
Trash, litter or debris on the property	Regularly pick up and properly dispose of litter and trash. Make sure trash receptacles are covered and secure. Consider creating a compost pile to turn yard debris into rich soil for your garden.
Yard chemicals such as fertilizer, pesticides, or herbicides stored outside	Try to buy only what you need for the job to eliminate having to deal with leftover products and materials.
Paint or stain stored outside	If possible, store these materials inside. If these materials must be stored outside, keep them tightly sealed in watertight containers or covered with a tarp, preferably off the ground and sheltered from rain.
Cleaners stored outside	
Vehicle fluids, fuel or used vehicle parts stored outside	
Building materials such as roofing, adhesives or sealants stored outside	
Vehicle drips or leaks in driveway or street	Regularly maintain vehicles. Soak up any drips or leaks with absorbent material such as cat litter. Sweep up and dispose of the absorbent material in the trash. Never use water to clean paved areas.
Vehicle washing at home	Consider taking vehicles to a car wash. If you plan to clean your vehicles at home, wash them on a grassy area to allow wash water to soak into the ground rather than run off your property.
Pet waste on the ground	Regularly pick up and properly dispose of pet waste in the trash.
Septic tank system	A soggy yard or sewage backing up into your home indicates your system needs immediate service. Avoid putting oil, grease, or harsh chemicals down the drain to help keep the septic system working properly. Have the septic tank inspected and cleaned out every 5 years.
Used cooking oil and grease poured outside on the ground	This practice attracts critters like snakes, opossums and rats. Instead, visit one of Jefferson County's 19 collection stations to get a free gallon container and start recycling used cooking oil and grease.

To report suspected water pollution, call 205.325.5792

Questions or comments? Email diclementel@jccal.org or call 205.325.8741