STORMWATER POLLUTION

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

FRANK E. MELTON, MAYOR

Gutters and drains take rainwater from our streets straight into rivers, lakes, harbors and oceans. So when it rains, stormwater runoff can carry with it pollution from around our homes and streets...into the waterways we swim in and where animals and plants live.

If we stop pollution entering gutters and drains in the first place, we can help keep our waterways clean and healthy. That way, they will provide a better environment for us, animals and plants.

We can help prevent storm water pollution from ruining our waterways by taking steps to stop detergents, paints, leaves, grass clippings, cigarette butts and other litter from ending up in our gutters and drains.

SWEEP THEM UP BEFORE THEY WASH AWAY

Even natural things like leaves, garden clippings and soil can harm our waterways. In bushland or in our gardens, leaves are scattered and decay where they fall. But when they are washed into the stormwater system they become concentrated – imagine the impact of all the leaves and dirt in all the streets from 3 miles around washing directly into your local waterway. Debris that washes into the stromwater system can cause flooding.

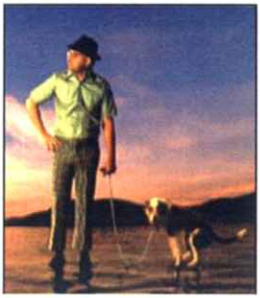
It causes big problems. When leaves and clippings decay in water, they use up oxygen. Taking oxygen away from the water can kill plants, fish and other animals that live in our waterways. Soil is a problem too. It makes waterways cloudy and can silt them up. Silt can suffocate fish by clogging their gills.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Sweep your gutters and driveways rather than hosing them down.
- Put leaves in the compost or on the garden as mulch.
- Rake up grass clippings then mulch or compost them.
- Cover piles of soil, sand or mulch to stop them from washing into drains.
- Build barriers around your garden beds to contain the soil (and any fertilizers you are using).
- Plant grass where soil is exposed.

PICK UP YOUR DOG'S DROPPINGS

When dog droppings are left on a footpath they can wash into our waterways, where they can increase the level of bacteria and make your local waterway unsafe for swimming.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Train your dog to go in your garden.
- When you're out, pick up your dog's droppings with a plastic bag and put them in the bin.

CLEAN UP PAINT THE RIGHT WAY

Cleaning paint brushes and rollers into gutters or drains puts chemicals in the water which can poison frogs, fish and other aquatic life.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- When using water-based paint, clean up over soil.
- When using oil-based paint:

-keep paint and solvents clear of gutters and drains
-allow unused paint to dry out and then put it in the bin.

BIN YOUR BUTTS

A single cigarette butt or bottle top might not seem like much. But in their thousands and in combination with other litter, they cause serious pollution. Litter can block drains and cause flooding. It looks awful too.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Put your cigarette butts and other litter in the bin.
- Pitch in and help clean up littered areas.
- If there is no bin handy, hold onto your litter until you find one.
- Carry a container for your cigarette butts.

WASH YOUR CAR ON THE GRASS

If you wash your car in the street or on your driveway, detergents, mud, oil and grease can wash directly into the stormwater system. Many detergents contain phosphates which over-fertilize waterways and can lead to a build up of toxic algae which is harmful to fish and humans too.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Try to wash your vehicle on a grassy area or over gravel.
- If you don't have a suitable area, visit a friend or relative who does.
- Use as little detergent as you can and pour any leftover soapy water onto the lawn.
- Use a service station's car washing bay or a car wash that recycles water.
- When cleaning under the car, check for any fluid leaks and get them repaired.

For More Information Contact
CITY OF JACKSON
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT DIVISION
200 South President Street - 5th Floor
Post Office Box 17
Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0017

Office: 601-960 -1168 • Facsimile: 601-960 -1142 • Website: www.jacksonms.gov