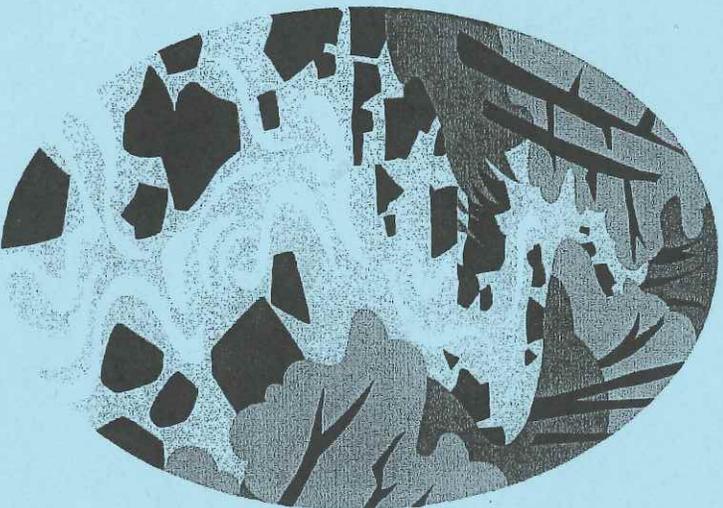


# NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION IN GEORGIA



## HOW YOU CAN HELP.

### IDENTIFY & ELIMINATE SOURCES OF WATER

**POLLUTION.** Practice pollution prevention! Store materials properly and isolate them from storm drains and streams. Dispose of waste materials properly. Make sure all contaminated washwater and process waste is discharged into sanitary sewer systems. **WHY?...** Anything entering a storm drain goes directly into streams, untreated.

**CONTROL EROSION AT CONSTRUCTION SITES.** Prepare and follow the erosion and sediment control plan. Maintain management practices until the site is stabilized. Retain as much natural vegetation as practical. **WHY?...** Sediment is a major pollutant. Silt builds up in urban waters, adversely affecting aquatic life and water quality.

**SHOP WISELY.** Buy household products labeled *non-toxic*, *non-phosphorus*, or *water soluble*. **WHY?...** Toxic chemicals in household products can cause a wastewater treatment plant to malfunction. Since they do not break down in treatment, they can harm stream life and promote excessive growth of aquatic weeds and algae.

**STORE PRODUCTS SAFELY.** Keep all toxic products in their original containers, closed, clearly marked and in a safe storage place. **WHY?...** Toxins must be kept out of the reach of children and pets.

**DISPOSE OF TRASH PROPERLY.** Don't litter! **WHY?...** Styrofoam, plastics (such as plastic rings on six-pack beverages) and other debris can injure and kill fish and wildlife and contaminate water sources.

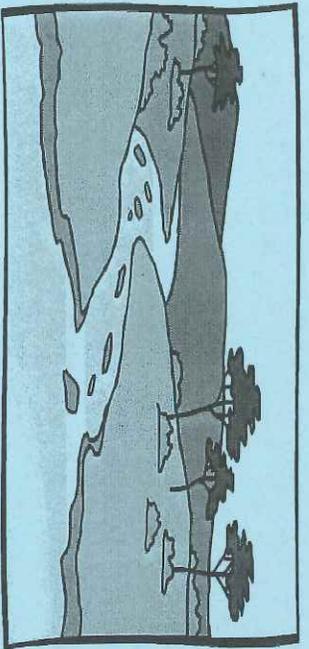
**MAINTAIN YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM PROPERLY.** Inspect your septic system annually. Pump it out every 3-5 years. Avoid using caustic drain cleaners (use boiling water or a mechanical reamer when needed). Avoid discharging pesticides, solvents, or hazardous chemicals into your septic system. **WHY?...** You may destroy waste-reducing bacteria in the tank, clog the absorption field, or cause inadequately treated wastes to eventually discharge into the nearest stream.



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## WHAT IS NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION?

Nonpoint source water pollution is caused by our activities in the drainage basin. The resulting pollutants are carried to streams by stormwater runoff from streets, neighborhoods, parking lots, farmlands, and construction sites. Blame for water pollution often is directed toward "point" sources, such as domestic and industrial wastewater treatment facilities. But these sources can be identified and controlled. The major challenge to urban streams is from difficult-to-identify "nonpoint" sources - such as improper land development practices, spills and improper disposal of wastes and stormwater runoff which washes the wastes from our daily activities into our urban streams. Because storm drains usually are separate from our household sewer systems, these polluted waters flow directly into Georgia's streams and rivers without treatment.

## HOW DOES NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION IMPACT THE QUALITY OF GEORGIA'S RIVER BASINS?

Nonpoint source pollution has a significant impact on water quality and wildlife throughout Georgia, especially during rainy weather when large amounts of these pollutants pour into Georgia's urban streams, wetlands, lakes, and rivers. Contaminants build up and increasingly degrade the quality of water throughout the state. Nonpoint source pollutants present an ongoing hazard for the fish, birds and wildlife living in and around Georgia's water bodies and for each of us who daily use and enjoy these water resources for drinking, cooking, washing and recreation.

## WHAT ARE NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTANTS?

Did you ever consider what happens to the oil you often see on roads and highways after it rains? Or what happens to contaminants in the air from car exhaust, detergent suds from washing your car, leaves and lawn clippings that clog street gutters, or the trash and grime left on parking lots and other exposed surfaces? These are the kinds of pollutants that flow into the storm drain system.

Some of the major pollutants deposited into Georgia's streams, lakes and rivers are:

- Sediment from soil erosion caused from uncontrolled construction activities and enlarged stream banks.
- Oil and grease from automotive leaks and spills on paved parking areas or the improper disposal of used oil and automotive products into storm drains.
- Surplus runoff or improper disposal of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers from lawns, gardens, farms and golf courses.
- Metals and organic compounds found in vehicle exhaust, weathered paint, tire residue, unauthorized discharges, motor oil or plastic products.
- Organic contaminants from litter, organic matter and sludge, garbage from dumpsters and garbage cans and pet and livestock waste.
- Excessive nutrients from sewer leaks and septic tanks, sediments and fertilizers.



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## HOW YOU CAN HELP.

**LEAVE NATIVE VEGETATION IN OR ALONGSIDE STREAMS. WHY?...** Streamside vegetation provides food and shelter for fish and wildlife; overhanging trees maintain cooler temperatures and deter algae growth; roots stabilize streambanks and prevent erosion.

**CHOOSE NATIVE VEGETATION. WHY?...** It requires less fertilizer.

**COMPOST LEAVES, GRASS & SHRUB CLIPPINGS. WHY?...** They will decompose and return nutrients to the soil.

**USE GARDEN & LAWN CHEMICALS WISELY.** Use pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers carefully and sparingly, and only when other methods have failed. Do not apply if rain is forecast. **WHY?...** Fertilizers promote algae and weed growth in streams. Pesticides are toxic to people and fish.

**WATER ONLY YOUR LAWN AND GARDEN.** Divert rain spouts and garden hoses from paved surfaces onto grass. **WHY?...** This allows runoff to filtrate naturally through the soil.

**RESTRICT PETS FROM STREAMSIDE AREA. WHY?...** Animals can destroy native vegetation. Fecal bacteria from animal wastes lowers water quality.

**DON'T DUMP USED MOTOR OIL DOWN STORMDRAINS. WHY?...** Anything entering a storm drain goes directly into streams untreated.

**SERVICE YOUR CAR REGULARLY & REDUCE AUTOMOTIVE EMISSIONS WHY?...** Leakage of motor oil, antifreeze and other fluids eventually will reach the nearest stream. Auto emissions unleash lead, sulfur and other waste products into the air, which can settle onto paved surfaces and eventually be washed into storm drains.

**USE NO SOAP OR LOW PHOSPHATE SOAP** when washing your car at home. Wash on lawn or other unpaved, vegetated area. **WHY?...** Soap washes into the streets and down storm drains directly into streams, increasing nutrient levels and polluting water.

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Keep Oconee County Beautiful Commission added 3 new photos.

October 21, 2017 · 🌐

Come visit us today at the Fall Festival in front of Rocket Gym.

