

Clean Water is Important to All of Us!

It's up to all of us to make it happen. In recent years sources of pollution like industrial wastes from factories have been greatly reduced. Now more than 60 percent of water pollution comes from things like cars leaking oil; fertilizers from farms, lawns, and gardens; pet waste; residential car washing; and failing septic tanks.

All these sources add up to a big pollution problem. But each of us can do small things to help clean up our water too—and that adds up to a pollution solution!

Why Do We Need Clean Water?

Having a clean environment is of primary importance for our health and economy. Clean waterways provide recreation, commercial opportunities, fish habitat, and add beauty to our landscape. All of us benefit from clean water—and all of us have a role in getting and keeping our lakes, rivers, wetlands, and ground waters clean.

Protect Our Watersheds One Drop at a Time

Your actions can help keep our water clean.
Find out how and spread the word!



www.mywatersheds.org



For more information about protecting our water visit
our website or contact the agency listed below.

Cover Image Courtesy of Puget Sound Action Team, a cooperative venture between the Washington State Department of Ecology, King County and the cities of Bellevue, Seattle and Tacoma

Contact Information

Motor Oil

WHEN YOUR CAR'S LEAKING OIL ON
THE STREET, REMEMBER IT'S NOT JUST
LEAKING OIL ON THE STREET.



"Only Rain Down the Storm Drain!"

What's the problem with motor oil?



Leaking oil goes from car to street. It then washes from the street into the storm drain and into our rivers, lakes, and streams.

Oil does not dissolve in water. It lasts a long time and sticks to everything from soil and rocks to bird feathers. Oil and other petroleum products are toxic to people, wildlife and plants.

One pint of oil can make a slick larger than a football field. Used motor oil is the largest single source of oil pollution in our lakes, streams and rivers. Americans spill **180 million gallons** of used oil each year into our waters. This is **16 times** the amount spilled by the Exxon Valdez in Alaska.



How Can You Use and Change your Motor Oil and Help Keep Our Environment Clean?

You can help keep our lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, and groundwater clean by applying the following tips.

- Stop drips. Check for oil leaks regularly and fix them promptly. Keep your car tuned to reduce oil use.
- Use ground cloths or drip pans beneath your vehicle if you have leaks or are doing engine work. Clean up spills immediately. Collect all used oil in containers with tight fitting lids. Do not mix different engine fluids.
- Never dispose of oil or other engine fluids down the storm drain, on the ground or into a ditch.
- Recycle used motor oil. Many auto parts stores and gas stations will accept used oil.
- Buy recycled (re-refined) motor oil to use in your car.
- To find out more about where you can take used oil for recycling in your community, call the number listed on the back of this brochure.

When you dump automotive fluids into storm drains, it has the same result as dumping the materials directly into our waterbodies.

Where Do All of Those Storm Drains Lead?



Did you know that storm drains are NOT connected to sanitary sewer systems and treatment plants?

The purpose of storm drains is to carry rainwater away from developed areas to prevent flooding. Untreated storm water and the pollutants it carries flow directly into our creeks, rivers, and eventually the Great Lakes.

Together we can stop water pollution at the source!

