

# Stormwater Pollution? Make A POINT - Don't Do It.

## What Are Sources of Pollution?

Pollution of our waterways comes from two types—point and nonpoint sources. Point sources of pollution can be traced to a specific location. Typically this type of pollution can be tied to a defined source such as an industrial or sewage treatment plant. Non-point source pollution, by contrast, come from a wide range of sources. If it rained or snowed today in your community, runoff from this precipitation picked up several kinds of natural and human made pollutants, eventually depositing them into our three rivers. Non-point source pollution can include:

- excess fertilizers
- herbicides and insecticides from treating your lawn to make it healthier
- oil, grease and toxic chemicals from your vehicle and energy production
- viruses, bacteria and nutrients from pet waste
- road salts from treatments used to get rid of snow
- sediment from improperly managed construction sites, crop and forest lands, and eroding stream banks
- and acid drainage from abandoned mines



## Think Stormwater Pollution Doesn't Affect You? Think Again.

- Sediment can cloud water, inhibiting growth of aquatic plants or destroying entire habitats.
- Excess nutrients can cause algae blooms. When algae die, they sink to the bottom and decompose, removing oxygen from the water. Fish can't survive in water with low oxygen levels.
- Bacteria and other pathogens that infiltrate into swimming areas, create public health hazards, forcing beach closures.
- Debris such as plastic bags, cigarette butts, and bottles often gets washed into water bodies, threatening aquatic life.
- Common household chemical waste such as paints, pesticides and motor oil can poison aquatic life.
- Polluted storm water also negatively impacts drinking water sources, impacting human health and increasing the costs to treat it.

## Make A Point—Don't Do It!

- Keep debris out of street gutters and storm drains.
- Apply lawn and garden chemicals sparingly and carefully follow the directions.
- Dispose of used household chemicals properly—not in storm sewers or drains. Check the DEP web-site for information on household hazardous waste collection programs:  
<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=514&objID=589595&mode=2>
- Immediately clean up spills.
- Wash your car on the grass to prevent runoff, or better, take it to the car wash.
- Use low-phosphate or phosphate free detergents.
- Spread mulch on the bare ground to help prevent erosion and runoff.
- Clean up after your pets.
- Gutters and down spouts should drain onto vegetated or gravel- filled seepage areas .
- Participate in clean-up activities in your community.

