

In Your Water

DID YOU KNOW?

When it rains or snow melts, that water moves into the soil or flows over paved streets, parking lots, driveways and sidewalks. Some of the natural and manmade trash (pollution) on the paved ground gets swept along with the water, and moves directly into our favorite places like ponds, lakes, rivers, oceans, and drinking water. Some places, like cities, have storm drains to help prevent flooding which moves the dirty water from the streets to underground pipes and then to our favorite water sources.

Types of pollution (some you can see and others are invisible):

- Leaves, grass
- Oil or grease that is spilled on the ground from cars
- Soil and dirt
- Trash (plastic, paper, food waste)
- Lawn chemicals



We want healthy drinking water and clean water to play in!

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO

You can help keep our water clean by:

- 1 Cleaning up leaves, grass clippings, and trash from your yard, driveway, sidewalk, and streets;
- 2 Keep cars in good working order. If you notice oil in your driveway, then your car may have an oil leak;
- 3 Use reusable water bottles and containers instead of throwing away plastic bottles and containers.
- 4 Ask your parents to use little or no chemicals on their lawns.
- 5 Do the activity on the back of this page, and talk with your family about how each item contributes to water pollution.

FIND OUT MORE *Informational websites and fun resources:*

- Visit PennState Department of Ecosystem Science and Management <https://ecosystems.psu.edu/research/centers/private-forests/news/stormwater-whats-a-property-owner-to-do>
- Kids Environment Kids Health <https://kids.niehs.nih.gov/topics/pollution/water/index.htm>
- Yardscaping <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/php/pesticides/yardscaping/index.htm>

ACTIVITY: *WHAT'S IN YOUR WATER?*

What You Need:

- A plastic tub or bucket
- Water – should fill tub or bucket up halfway
- Leaves and/or grass clippings
- Vegetable oil – about 1/4 cup
- Food waste (like chips, candy)
- Paper, tissues, or piece of toilet paper
- Soil
- Empty plastic water bottle
- A stick from the yard for stirring the water



Instructions:

You will be adding items into the tub of water and talking about how these things can pollute the water immediately and over time.

- 1** Fill up the tub halfway with water from your faucet.
- 2** Add items one at a time, and talk with your family about how each of the items contributes to water pollution now and over time.

Talking Points:

- Leaves decay over time.
- Oil covers lots of things and doesn't disperse.
- Paper dissolves.
- Dirt and soil has bacteria.
- Food can go bad and cause sickness.
- Plastic bottles can break down over time and form microplastics.

- 3** Stir the water with the stick and see what happens.
- 4** Clean or throw away the items properly after the activity.