

WHAT IS STORM WATER?

Storm water is produced by rain or snowmelt that flows over roofs, lawns, and paved areas, like driveways and roads, and is carried away by a system of storm water pipes, culverts and ditches.

WHY IS STORM WATER RUNOFF A PROBLEM?

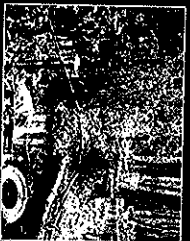
As storm water flows over parking lots, lawns, driveways, roads and sidewalks, it picks up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants. This untreated water is discharged into the water bodies that we use for swimming, fishing and drinking. Polluted runoff is the nation's greatest threat to clean water.

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT YOU?

Polluted storm water runoff can have many harmful effects on plants, fish, animals and people.

Oil and Other Chemicals

Contaminants such as insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, motor oil, and other vehicle fluids can poison aquatic life. Land animals and people can become sick from eating contaminated fish or ingesting polluted water.

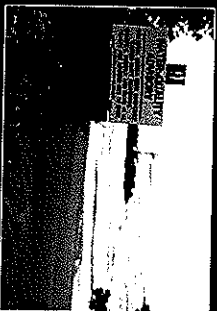


Debris

Trash, such as plastic bags, six-pack rings, bottles and cigarette butts, when washed into water bodies can choke, suffocate, or displace aquatic life like ducks, fish, turtles, and birds.

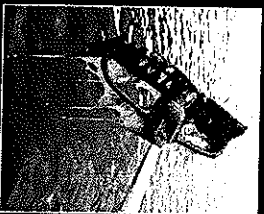
Bacteria and Pathogens

Bacteria and other pathogens, from pet waste and failing septic systems, can wash into swimming areas, creating health hazards and often making beach closures necessary.



Nutrients

Excessive nutrients from fertilizers and detergents can cause algal blooms. When the algae die and decompose, they deplete oxygen levels in the water. Fish and other aquatic organisms cannot live when oxygen levels are too low.



Sediment

Sediment, deposited from soil erosion, can cloud the water, making it difficult for aquatic plants to grow. Excessive sediment can also destroy aquatic habitats.



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP PREVENT STORM WATER POLLUTION?

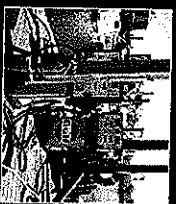
Vehicle Maintenance and Operation:

- ✔ Routinely check your vehicle for leaks.
- ✔ Do not leave tires or other car parts on the side of the highway.
- ✔ Notify Thruway personnel when you see puddles of oil in the parking lot.



Watercraft Maintenance and Operation:

- ✔ Do not pump bilge water that is oily or has a sheen and do not use detergents to clean bilge.
- ✔ Use non-toxic, phosphate-free biodegradable cleaners.
- ✔ Clean boat bottoms ashore over hard surfaces or a tarp, where all debris can be contained.
- ✔ When fueling, avoid spilling, topping off, or overfilling and keep oil absorbing pads aboard your watercraft.



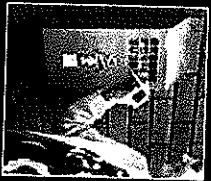
Pet Waste:

- ✔ When walking your pet, pick up the waste with a pooper scooper or plastic bag and dispose of it properly.
- ✔ Flushing pet waste is the best disposal method.
- ✔ Do not dispose of pet waste near storm drains, culverts, ditches or water bodies.



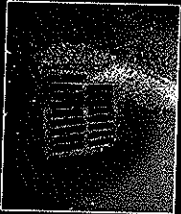
Trash and Cigarette Butts:

- ❑ Put your cigarette butts and other litter in the proper receptacles.
- ❑ Do not empty ashtrays in parking lots or into the Canal.
- ❑ If there is no garbage bin handy, hold onto your litter until you find one or come ashore.
- ❑ Never dispose of trash out of your vehicle window or into the Canal.



Illegal Dumping:

- ❑ Never dump used oil or other automotive fluids into the Canal, onto pavement, down the storm drains, in culverts, or in ditches.
- ❑ If you observe illegal dumping, notify the proper authorities.
- ❑ Empty portable toilets at pump out stations, not into the Canal.
- ❑ Be cautious of what you dump or spill in parking lots, because it will eventually end up in a stream or waterway, such as the Canal.



HERE'S WHAT THE THRUWAY AND CANAL ARE DOING:

The Thruway Authority and Canal Corporation are currently developing a Storm Water Management Program (SWMP) with the primary goal of reducing storm water pollution along the Thruway and Canal and at all of their facilities. During the first year of the SWMP, a large amount of data gathering, mapping, procedural review and training was accomplished. Year 2 activities will focus on evaluating the collected information, posting and displaying educational materials, and implementing operational changes learned during training. Educating the public on how they can prevent storm water pollution is an important tool, and will have a major impact on the effectiveness of the program.

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION:
WWW.THURWAY.STATE.NY.US

For Additional Information About the Thruway and Canal Storm Water Management Programs, Contact:



Environmental Services Bureau

(518) 471-5926

200 Southern Boulevard

PO Box 189

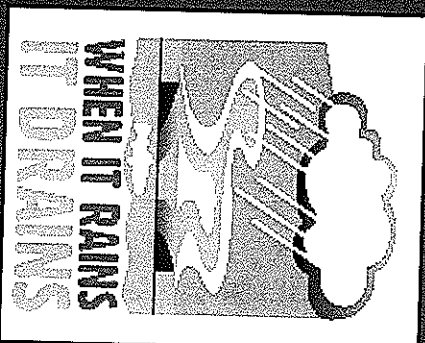
Albany, NY 12201-0189



Information Provided by:

After the Storm: A citizen's guide to Understanding Stormwater by the Environmental Protection Agency

STORM WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION



WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

