

# Top Ten Things You Can Do to Help Keep the Area Waterways Clean

1. **Be a watershed watchdog.**

If you see a potential stormwater problem, such as clogged storm drains, trash in the gutter, pollutants washing into or discharging from storm sewers, or uncontrolled erosion from construction sites, contact your local municipal or county public works department.

2. **Pick Up After Your Pets.**

You can flush pet waste down the toilet; bury it 4-6 inches deep in the yard or dispose in a specially designed composter. Do not put it in your vegetable garden or compost that will be used for your garden.

**Information About Pet Waste:**

<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/Pet-Waste-and-Water-Quality-P612C0.aspx>

3. **Properly Apply Lawn and Garden Fertilizer.**

Test your soil before buying and applying fertilizer to your lawn. Most lawns don't need phosphorus, so don't pay for something you don't need. If soil tests show that your lawn does need fertilizer, apply according to manufacturer's instructions. Don't "double the dose".

**Information About Fertilizers:**

<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/GWQ002.pdf>

<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A2166.pdf>

<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/A2308.pdf>

4. **Properly Dispose of Yard Waste.**

Use leaves and/or grass clippings as mulch, or add it to a compost pile. Clippings and leaves can also be tilled directly into gardens or flowerbeds.

- Shorewood Hills residents may dispose of their grass clippings on the grass pile at the Rock Quarry.
- The Shorewood Hills Public Works crew will collect leaves left at the side of the road throughout the spring and fall.
- The Public Works crew also collects brush that is left at the side of the road once a week throughout the spring, summer and fall.
- Recycling and garbage collection is done every Monday in Shorewood Hills.

5. **Properly Dispose of Household Chemicals.**

Use non-toxic alternatives to conventional household chemicals whenever possible. When not possible, properly dispose of hazardous household chemicals such as oil-based paints, cleaning chemicals, pesticides, solvents, batteries and disinfectants. Never dispose of hazardous chemicals or wash paintbrushes in the storm drain. Learn more about how to properly dispose of hazardous chemicals through the Dane County Clean Sweep Program.

<http://www.danecountycleansweep.com/>

6. **Practice Careful Car Care.**

Regularly maintain your car and fix any oil, radiator or transmission leak as soon as you see them. If you change your own oil, make sure to take the used oil to a recycling collection site. Never pour it behind the garage, on the driveway to kill weeds or down the storm drain. Also, consider using a commercial car wash, or wash your car on your lawn to prevent car-washing detergents from washing down the storm drain.

**Information About Car Care:**

<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/GWQ019.pdf>

7. **Maximize Infiltration.**

Maximize infiltration in your yard by directing rainwater away from paved areas. Plant a rain garden filled with deep-rooted grasses and wildflowers to maximize water absorption into the ground. If you don't have a rain garden, aim downspouts to grassy areas or into a rain barrel.

**DNR Rain Garden Information:**

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/nps/rg/links.htm>

**Rain Garden Brochures:**

<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/GWQ034.pdf>

<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/GWQ037.pdf>

8. **Use a proper container for trash and recyclables.**

Don't put trash into the street or gutter where it can be washed into the storm sewer system and then to local waterways.

9. **Keep soil in your yard, and out of waterways.**

Bare soil easily washes into the storm drains. Cover exposed soil with seed and mulch as soon as possible. Cover piles of soil for your yard or garden with a tarp until you're ready to use it. If you're building a home, choose a builder who takes extra care not to track mud onto the streets, and who installs and maintains practices that prevent soil from washing off your lot during construction.

10. **Join A Local Watershed Association.**

Join a local watershed or conservation group and help clean up waterways in your area. Check out the following website to learn more about organizations in Dane County working to clean up local waterways.

**Friends of the Dane County Office of Lakes & Watersheds**

<http://www.danewaters.com/other/friends.aspx>