

Storm water can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants and flow into a storm drain system or directly to a water body. Anything that enters a storm drain system is discharged untreated into the water bodies we use for swimming, fishing and recreation.

Why is Storm Water Runoff a Problem?

Storm water runoff occurs when rainwater flows over the ground. Surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, and streets prevent storm water from naturally soaking into the ground.

The Town of Gilbert's storm drain system consists of streets, curbs, gutters, dry wells and other infrastructure that conveys the storm water away to retention basins or to the East Maricopa Floodway (EMF) or the Salt River Project (SRP) canals, all of which are considered "waters of the United States." Discharges to these waters are regulated by the state and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).



What is Storm Water Runoff?

- Household hazardous wastes like pesticides, paint, insecticides, solvents, and used motor oil can poison the environment.



- According to the EPA, polluted storm water can affect drinking water sources. This can affect human health and increase drinking water treatment costs.



- Debris in the water, such as plastic bags, six-pack rings, cigarette butts and bottles, can seriously injure aquatic life like ducks, turtles, fish, and birds.
- Sediment can cloud the water and make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow.



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

The Effects of Pollution

Pollution prevention begins with you...

A Citizen's Guide to Storm Water Management



Funded by a grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ)



Environmental Programs
www.gilbertaz.gov/environment



Pollution Prevention Begins with YOU...

Did You Know?

Dumping one quart of motor oil down a storm drain can contaminate 250,000 gallons of water.



Recycle, or properly dispose of household products that contain chemicals, such as pesticides, paint, solvents, and used motor oil. Don't pour them onto the ground or into storm drains

Household Maintenance:

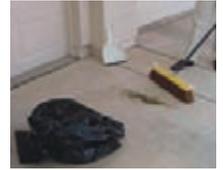
By changing your buying and disposal practices for commonly used products, you will be helping the environment. This is easy to do and doesn't require much time.

- Buy products such as household cleaners and furniture polish labeled "non-toxic." Purchase only the amount you need.
- Properly use and store hazardous products including cleaners, solvents, and paints. Keep containers covered.
- Use kitty litter or other absorbent material to clean spills on paved surfaces. Bag and dispose in trash.
- Use solvent only with stains and varnishes. Keep the solvent and let the particles settle to the bottom while the solvent on top is clean and useable.
- Reduce, reuse, recycle, and participate in local Household Hazardous Waste collection events.



Lawn and Garden:

Excess fertilizers and pesticides used on lawns and gardens wash off and pollute waterways. Yard clippings and leaves can wash into storm drains.



- Don't over water your lawn. Call Water Conservation at 480.503.6098 for suggestions on how to water properly.
- Use pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers carefully in accordance with label instructions. Don't apply when rain is forecasted.
- Use a rake or broom to clean up garden clippings or remove leaves from walks and driveways. Put clippings in a compost pile or garbage can, not in the street.
- Direct rain spouts onto grass, flowerbeds, or shrubbery to water your lawn and garden. Consider collecting rainwater for watering plants in your yard.

More Residential Pollution Solutions



Pet Waste:

Pet waste can be a source of bacteria and pollution in water bodies, dry wells and retention basins where other pets and children play.

- Pick up animal waste and dispose of it properly. **It's the law** (Town of Gilbert Ordinance No. 1007, section 1, 11-19-96).
- When walking your pet, take along a plastic bag to collect waste for disposal at home.

Automotive:

Washing your car and cleaning auto parts can send contaminants into the storm water system. Dumping oil and other fluids into a storm drain is the same as dumping them directly into a water body.

- Take used motor oil and antifreeze to a household hazardous waste collection event or to local automotive or tire businesses that will accept them.
- Have your car inspected and maintained regularly to reduce leakage of oil, antifreeze, and other fluids.
- Reduce automobile emissions through regular maintenance, ride sharing, and use of public transportation.
- Rather than washing your car in the driveway, take it to a car wash where the wash water is recycled.

Over the next few years, the Town of Gilbert will protect 4,500 storm drains by identifying them with permanent markers. The markers remind residents to help protect our system from illegal dumping.

