



Pollution Prevention Begins With You: A Guide to Protecting Our Water

Did you know that there are two sewer systems?

- The *sanitary sewer* collects waste water from homes, business and industry from sinks, toilets and other outlets. It goes to the water treatment plant for treatment.
- The *storm sewer* collects runoff from streets. There is no treatment for the storm sewer; storm water goes into the ground and eventually into the ground water. Anything dumped or left in the street or gutter is pollution that can enter retention basins where children and pets play and from there can infiltrate and contaminate our ground water. Dumping one quart of motor oil down the drain can contaminate up to 25,000 gallons of water.



1 quart of motor oil can contaminate
250,000 gallons of water

How you can help:

- Buying “green” products instead of those with toxic chemicals.
- Purchase the right amount of product to avoid having leftovers.
- Dispose of waste properly. Gilbert has a Household Hazardous Waste facility that takes waste free of charge for Gilbert residents. Go to www.gilbertaz.gov/hhw for more information.

When disposing of chemicals stop and think. Here are some ways to keep pollutants out of our environment.

Household & Home Maintenance:

- Buy household products such as cleaners labeled non-toxic. Purchase only the amounts you need to avoid waste.
- Take unwanted household hazardous waste like cleaners and paints to Gilbert’s Household Hazardous Waste collection facility.
- Use kitty litter or other absorbent to clean up spills from paved surfaces. Depending on the substance, dispose of the absorbents in your black barrel or take it to Gilbert’s Household Hazardous Waste collection facility.

Lawn & Garden:

- Prevent yard waste and dirt from entering the gutter. Yard waste such as grass or dirt can clog the storm system.
- Use pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizer according to instructions. Over use can cause runoff into the storm system potentially causing groundwater contamination.
- Direct rainspouts onto grass or into flowerbeds or shrubbery to water your lawn and garden.
- Pick up animal waste and throw it into your black barrel.



Automotive:

- Take used automotive liquids to Gilbert’s Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility.
- Maintain vehicles to avoid leaking fluids into the street or storm gutters.
- Take your car to the car wash instead of washing it in the street. Carwashes recycle their water and have filters to reduce the amount of automotive fluids entering the stormwater system.

Only Rain in the Storm Drain