

Our watershed

The watershed is the total land area from which rainwater drains to a stream, river or body of water. Our main watershed includes the Merrimack River and its tributaries - the Concord River, Nashua River, Stony Brook and Beaver Brook.

The watershed is everyone's responsibility. Polluted runoff occurs when it rains or when snow melts. Water 'runs off' roads, parking lots, sidewalks, lawns and paved areas, picking up oil, debris, soil, fertilizer and other pollutants. This polluted water then flows directly into waterways or storm drains, which lead to our watershed - streams, rivers, wetlands and lakes.



According to the Environmental Protection Agency polluted runoff is the greatest threat to clean water. How can you help?

Sign up for Storm Drain stenciling. This is a great activity for families and organizations. For more information on how you and your family/organization can participate, contact Christina Papadopoulos at:

cpapadopoulos@townofchelmsford.us

or call her at: 978-856-6701

Help stop polluted runoff!

Watershed Protection Tips for Residents

For more information about how you can stop polluted runoff visit these websites

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection:

www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:

www.epa.gov/nps

Northern Middlesex Stormwater Collaborative www.nmsc.org

Merrimack River Watershed Council:

www.merrimack.org

Local contact information

To find out more about what Chelmsford is doing to keep our watershed clean, contact Christina Papadopoulos at:

cpapadopoulos@townofchelmsford.us

She will advise you on what you and/or your family/organization can do to assist with stormwater management.

This brochure has been prepared by the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments through a Community Innovation Challenge Grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office for Administration and Finance.



How can you make a difference?

It's up to all of us to keep our streams, rivers and lakes clean. Polluted runoff can be easily reduced if everyone takes simple steps in their everyday lives, such as properly disposing of waste or minimizing use of lawn fertilizers.

At Home

Household Chemicals

- Take all unwanted household hazardous waste (HHW) such as paint, oils and toxic cleaning products, to local HHW events.
- Call 978-250-5203 for more information.

Repairs & Construction

- Make sure pollutants don't leave your property during remodeling or repair projects.
- Before work begins, locate the nearest storm drains and protect them from debris and other material.
- Discuss wastewater disposal options with your contractor.



In the yard

Fertilizers and Pesticides

- Use fertilizer sparingly and as directed on the label.
- Store fertilizers and pesticides under cover.

Lawn and Garden

- Avoid overwatering your lawn.
- Water your lawn after dusk or early in the day.
- Clear, remove and dispose of any debris, (including leaves and grass cuttings), in your yard waste container or by composting
- Install a rain barrel to collect rainwater.



Call 1-800-251-2352 to order a discounted Rain Barrel.

Pool/Spa

- Never dispose of acid wash wastewater, pool filter backwash or other pool cleaning wastewater into the storm drain.
- Before a pool is drained, all chlorine must be removed and your town may require a permit.

Pet Care



- Always pick up after your pet and dispose of pet waste properly.
- Flushing dog waste down the toilet is the best disposal method.
- For cats, dispose of litter in the trash.

Your Car

Washing

- Take your car to a commercial car wash.
- If you do wash your car at home, use as little water as possible and a phosphate free, biodegradable detergent. Consider washing your car on the lawn or other unpaved area.



Car Fluids

- Use drip pans to catch all oil, brake, and transmission fluids.
- Clean up any spills with absorbent materials like kitty litter, sand or rags.
- Take all waste material to local HHW collection events.
- Recycle used oils and automobile fluids at participating service stations.



- Don't dump these chemicals down storm drains, into road gutters, on the ground, or dispose of them in your trash.