

**GARBAGE IN...**

**...GARBAGE OUT.**



[www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org](http://www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org)

# Did you know that storm water receives no treatment and flows directly to our creeks, rivers, bayous and ultimately Galveston Bay?



Storm water, or rain water, flows into the storm drains you see at street corners or into roadside ditches.

Unlike the water that flows down the drains inside our homes and goes to sewage treatment facilities, storm water is not treated. Any garbage, grass clippings, dog excrement, and chemicals it picks up flows directly to our creeks, rivers, bayous and ultimately Galveston Bay. And that's something we all need to be concerned about because it pollutes the water we use for swimming, fishing and drinking.

## It's a dirty shame what polluted storm water is doing to fish, plants and people.

Whether it's litter, garbage, or sediment washed in from construction sites, whatever goes down the storm drain flows directly into the environment. Trash like plastic bags, bottles and cigarette butts can choke or suffocate fish, turtles and birds. Silt can cloud the water and kill aquatic plants. Bacteria and chemicals can wash into swimming areas and create health hazards, and sometimes cause beaches to close. And, household hazardous wastes such as used motor oil, paint and solvents can poison fish and shellfish and contaminate our drinking water.

Just imagine the number of health issues that contaminated water can cause!

It's not too late to make a difference. By making the connection between storm drains and our waterways, you've made the first step in keeping our water clean for you, your family and the entire community.



## The choice is clear. And you can help.

We all have a role to play in keeping our waterways clean. By understanding the problems and following the City of Houston's and Harris County's guidelines, you can decrease storm water pollution, help clean up our waterways and ensure a brighter future for us all.



### At home, here are a few simple things you can do to help:

- Don't sweep grass clippings, leaves or yard waste into the street or storm drain
- When walking your pet, pick up after your pet and put the waste in a bag that you put in your garbage at home
- Use pesticides and fertilizers according to instructions
- Do not over-water lawns and gardens. Over-watering can flush large quantities of pesticides, fertilizer, and soil directly into storm drains
- Purchase household and garden products that are "less toxic" to the environment
- Repair car leaks and dispose of used auto fluids and batteries at designated drop-off or recycling locations
- Wash your car on your lawn or gravel. Grass and gravel filter the dirt and soap out of the water and keep dirty runoff out of storm drains, which empty directly into streams, lakes and bayous. Don't worry, the soap won't hurt your lawn!
- Help educate your neighbors. Get a group together to mark storm rain inlets in your neighborhood with the "No Dumping, Flows to Galveston Bay" message
- Most of all - never throw anything down a storm drain that you wouldn't want to drink



## Get informed and get involved!

Clean water is all about prevention and being aware of behaviors that can lead to storm water pollution. Harris County and the City of Houston are here to help. For information on how to dispose of common household hazardous waste, less toxic alternatives, and proper use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers, visit our web site at [www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org](http://www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org) or call 713.290.3000 today. It's worth getting involved!



# Make keeping our waterways clean part of your nature.

For more information about local storm water quality programs visit:  
[www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org](http://www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org) or call 713.290.3000.



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