

The latest tips on keeping storm drains clean, making your yard green, cleaning up roadways and more.

For more information about our local Watershed Protection Group's Storm Water Quality programs, visit:
www.CleanWaterClearChoice.org or call (713) 290-3000.



Don't flood us with garbage.

Pollution costs us all. . . And there are fines.

Hazardous Waste Dumping Criminal Offenses and Penalties

- Texas Water Code, Section 7.162
- A person intentionally or knowingly transports, stores or disposes of any hazardous waste without a manifest or without all required permits
- Individuals - imprisonment up to 10 years and/or a \$1,000 to \$50,000 fine
- Corporations - \$1,000 to \$250,000 fine

Used Oil Dumping Criminal Offenses and Penalties

- Texas Water Code, Section 7.176
- A person intentionally discharges used oil or knowingly disposes of or otherwise handles any used oil within the State of Texas in violation of the rules for used oil
- Each day is a separate violation
- Fine of not less than \$1,000 or more than \$50,000 and/or imprisonment

Water Pollution Criminal Offenses and Penalties

- Texas Water Code, Section 7.145
- A person intentionally or knowingly discharges or permits the discharge of a waste or pollutant into or adjacent to water in the state that causes or threatens to cause water pollution without strict compliance with all required permits or other authorization; Water in the state includes drainage ditches and storm water sewers
- Each day is a separate violation
- Imprisonment up to five years and/or a fine up to \$100,000

Endangerment Criminal Offense and Penalty

- Texas Water Code, Sections 7.152-4
- Imprisonment up to 10 years and/or a fine up to \$500,000
- Corporation - fine up to \$250,000

Local and State Administrative and Civil Penalties for Non-Compliance with Storm Water Laws and Regulations

- Harris County's Local Regulation - up to \$1,000 per day per violation
- City of Houston's Local Ordinances maximum of \$2,000 per day per violation
- Texas Water Code, Section 7.052 - up to \$10,000 per day per violation
- Texas Water Code, Section 7.102 - up to \$25,000 per day per violation

Clean waterways start with you. . .
 Be part of the program

SEE INSIDE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON:

Don't be a strain on our drains:

Find out why you should keep our storm drains clean.

Get to know your watershed:

See where the rainwater runs off in your area.

Septic tips for skeptics:

Some sure ways to keep your septic system shipshape.

How to own the roadway:

Your chance for service, fame and cleaner byways.

How hazardous is your waste:

A quiz on which products pose a disposal problem.



Clean waterways start here.

Drains are just for water.

All of us know about Houston rains. But do you know about Houston's storm drains? They are not garbage cans; they are part of our system to carry rainwater away from our homes during storms. And the water that flows down them is not treated—it goes directly into our waterways, and ultimately,

to Galveston Bay. That's why we urge you not to put anything down the storm drains—that includes grass clippings, paint, doggy doo, pesticides, paper cups, garbage or anything that you wouldn't want to see on the beach. It all comes back to you—and us. And Harris County is here to help!



Where does your storm water go?

Harris County is divided into 22 geographical areas defined by nature that we call watersheds. Rainwater from each of these areas flows into a body of water such as a bayou or creek. Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes. Right now, we invite you to “go with the flow,” and find yours. It's a good idea to know in case of severe weather alerts or emergencies.

Harris County Watersheds:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Addicks Reservoir | Little Cypress Creek |
| Armand Bayou | Hunting Bayou |
| Barker Reservoir | Jackson Bayou |
| Brays Bayou | Little Cypress Creek |
| Buffalo Bayou | Luce Bayou |
| Carpenters Bayou | San Jacinto River |
| Cedar Bayou | Sims Bayou |
| Clear Creek | Spring Creek |
| Cypress Creek | Spring Gully & Goose Creek |
| Galveston Bay | Vince Bayou |
| Greens Bayou | White Oak Bayou |
| | Willow Creek |



Don't be a strain on our drains.

It's up to all of us to keep our storm drains clear and our waterways clean. So that you will keep the issue top of mind, we've put together a few helpful hints



Doggie doo is a don't. We don't mean to hound you, but when walking your favorite Fido, please don't put his or her droppings down the drain or leave them on the ground so the rain can wash them down the drain.



Bag it, don't blow it. Autumn means falling leaves, but don't fall into the habit of putting them down the storm drain or along side the curb after raking. That could not only result in backed up water but can pollute our waterways.



Paint and water don't mix. Yes, it's a great time of year to spruce up for the holidays, but don't paint the town, or our waterways. CAN the idea of throwing paint, chemicals or any other hazardous waste down the storm drains.

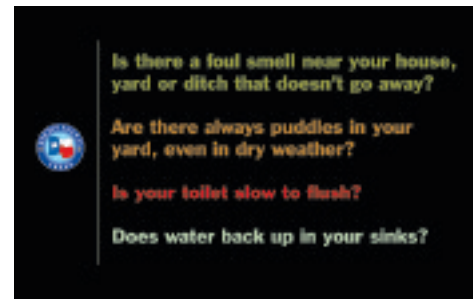
Can the motor oil. You wouldn't use 30-weight motor oil as a sauce on your seafood. Never put it down the storm drain or in the gutter, where it can be carried into Galveston Bay and marinate the fish and wildlife.



Don't flood us with garbage. Soft drink cups, paper bags, burger wrappers and other trash can clog the storm drains and cause rainwater to back up into the streets. So please, put them in the trash and not down the drain or on the ground.

Get the free course on growing greener.

Want to have a great looking yard by learning about “natural” gardening, or landscaping that requires less watering? Interested in finding out how to use the right amount of fertilizer? Then, sign up for the free, YardWise Seminar presented by the Harris County Watershed Protection Group. Log on to our website to get the details: www.CleanWaterClearChoice.org



We're looking for volunteers to go the extra mile.

Tired of looking at litter along our roadways? Like the idea of making our community cleaner while saving taxpayer dollars? Do you have a drive to see your name on your favorite stretch of roadway? Then it's time you become part of the Adopt-A-County-Mile Program.

Adopt-A-County-Mile is a fun opportunity for you, as an individual, or your business, civic club, organization or public agency to pitch in and help make things beautiful, while earning prominent recognition for your efforts. And you can count on us for the training, supplies and plenty of public appreciation! To find out how to reserve your stretch of roadway call (713) 290-3000.



Four things you can do to keep your septic in shape.

Clean waterways start in your own backyard. Your septic system treats the wastewater you and your family create every day, and a failed septic system is not only expensive to fix, but can be a significant source of ground and surface water contamination.

Pump it out. Have your septic tank professionally inspected every 2 to 3 years. The inspector will tell you when it needs to be pumped out by a licensed contractor, who can dispose of waste.

Don't run the water all the time! Conserve water inside your home and spread out water-intensive activities like showers, dishwashing and laundry

Avoid harsh chemicals. Check the label, and use only drain cleaners, toilet bowl cleaners and laundry detergents that are safe for use in septic systems. Avoid using septic tank additives—they are not necessary, and can contaminate groundwater.

Don't use your toilet or disposal as a garbage can. Dispose of all solids, even cigarette butts, coffee grounds, tampons, condoms and grease in the trash, not in toilets or drains. Put food waste in the garbage, not down the disposal.

The household hazardous waste quiz.

They sit on your shelves, in your garage and under your sink, collecting dust and excuses. In their time, they served their purpose, but now it's time to clean house. Do you know which items can be safely thrown in the trash and which items are considered Household Hazardous Waste requiring special disposal? Here's a quick quiz to get you started. Just check true or false, then check with us for more information.

- T F 1. Alkaline batteries (in pagers, toys, flashlights, etc.) are not considered hazardous waste and may be disposed of in your trash.
- T F 2. It's O.K. to throw dried latex paint containers in your trash.
- T F 3. Used oil and oil filters can often be recycled at local auto parts stores.
- T F 4. Don't throw compact fluorescent bulbs in the trash.
- T F 5. If you're in a hurry, it's alright to toss something without reading the label.

ANSWERS: True. But nickel-cadmium batteries should be taken to local electronics stores such as Best Buy, Radio Shack or Circuit City, and lead-acid or lithium batteries should be discarded at a hazardous waste event or facility. 2. True. Dried latex paint containers can be discarded, but oil-based paint is flammable, and even when dried is considered hazardous waste. 3. True. Log on to Earth911, <http://www.earth911.org/> or call 1-800-CLEAN UP to find a used oil collection center near you. 4. True. Compact fluorescent bulbs are considered household hazardous waste and should be disposed of at a household hazardous waste treatment facility or at a one-day collection event. However, regular light bulbs can be placed in the trash. 5. False. Always read the label.

For more information on disposal of Household Hazardous Waste Materials, log on to www.CleanWaterClearChoice.org. To learn more about scheduling a household hazardous waste collection for your neighborhood with our HazMobile, please phone the Watershed Protection Group at (713) 290-3000.

