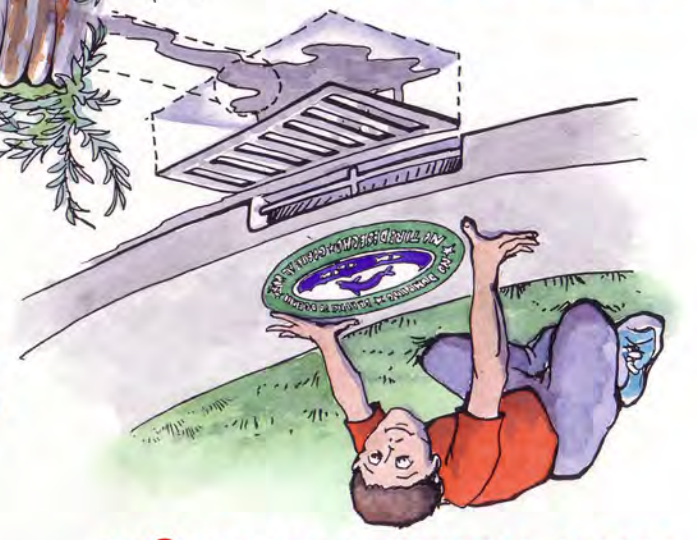




The storm drain system is designed to carry storm water runoff from the streets into the creeks to prevent flooding during rainstorms. Storm drains are not connected to the community sewer systems. When it rains or when water flows out of our yards and driveways, it washes pollution into storm drains, which flow directly into the creeks and ocean, untreated. This urban runoff includes trash, motor oil, fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides and pet waste. While individual homes might contribute only minor amounts of runoff pollution, the combined effect of an entire neighborhood or "watershed" can be serious to our creeks and beaches.

Before you pour anything on the ground or street, down the gutter or storm drain, **Stop and think!** Anything that enters the storm drains ends up in creeks and flows to the ocean untreated.



Even though you may live miles from the ocean, you may be polluting ocean water without knowing it.

Everything that goes down the storm drain flows directly into creeks and the ocean.

- On a rainy day, have you ever wondered what happens to...
- Motor oil on roads, highways, parking lots, driveways, and in storm drains?
  - Antifreeze from leaking cars?
  - Detergent from washing cars?
  - Trash or grime from parking lots, sidewalks and streets?
  - Fertilizers and pesticides from lawns and gardens?
  - Bare soil on hillsides?
  - Pet waste from lawns, streets, and sidewalks?

## We all live in a watershed



A watershed is the area of land which drains rain and runoff to a body of water, in our case the Pacific Ocean. We all live in a watershed.

The Santa Ynez Mountains are the main feature of our local watersheds. Water falling on the south side of the mountains drains to the Pacific Ocean. South Coast watersheds are the land from the Santa Ynez Mountains to the Pacific Ocean.

### Healthy vs. Unhealthy Watersheds

A healthy watershed includes native plants and animals, tree cover, stable banks and clean water. When a watershed is healthy, it provides important habitat for animals and plants, flood control protection, and a place for people to enjoy nature. An unhealthy watershed occurs when creeks are degraded and polluted.

### What Passes Through Our Watersheds Ends Up in the Ocean

When pollution enters the creeks, it makes its way to the ocean. Aquatic life can be harmed both in the creeks and ocean. The ocean may be polluted and unsafe for humans to swim in.

## Information Sources

**General Information:**

- City of Santa Barbara Creeks Division: 897-2658
- Santa Barbara County Water Agency: 568-3440

**Beach Closures & Weekly Monitoring Test Results:**

- Santa Barbara News-Press Listing (Saturday)
- Ocean Water Quality Hotline: 681-4949
- Website: [www.sbcpd.org/ehs/ocean.htm](http://www.sbcpd.org/ehs/ocean.htm)

**Septic or Gray Water Systems Maintenance:**

- County Environmental Health: 681-4900

**Dispose of Used Motor Oil or Household Hazardous Waste:**

- Used Oil Hotline: 1-800-CLEAN-UP
- Community Hazardous Waste Collection Center: 882-3602
- MarBorg Recycling Center: 963-1852

**Non-Toxic Pesticides:**

- [www.ourwaterourworld.org](http://www.ourwaterourworld.org)

For more information on how to prevent polluted runoff and protect watersheds, or to report water pollution, call:

**(877) OUR OCEAN**

For more information online:  
[www.sbprojectcleanwater.org](http://www.sbprojectcleanwater.org)  
[www.sbcreeks.com](http://www.sbcreeks.com)

Special thanks to Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary for use of brochure concept, and artist Gary Bloomfield.



# The Ocean Begins on Your Street



Help Prevent Pollution of Creek and Ocean Water





# The Ocean

# is Closer Than You Think

Can you find the activities in the picture that contribute to water pollution? How do these everyday activities result in pollutants entering the storm drains and the ocean? You can help prevent storm drain pollution and protect creeks and the ocean by following the suggestions below:

## Automotive



**RECYCLE USED MOTOR OIL** by taking it to an authorized auto parts store, gas station, or hazardous waste collection center. When changing your car's oil, prevent spills by placing cardboard under the oil pan. Use absorbent material like kitty litter to clean up spills. Never pour used motor oil down storm drains, on the ground, or driveways.



**RECYCLE YOUR CAR'S ANTIFREEZE.** Never drain antifreeze directly onto the ground or street. It is poisonous to pets and wildlife, which are attracted to its sweet smell and taste.



**WASH CARS AT A COMMERCIAL CAR WASH** where water is collected and treated. If you wash your vehicle at home, wash cars on unpaved surfaces such as your lawn, use a shutoff nozzle on your hose, and do not let wash water reach the street. Do not dump excess water on the driveway, gutter or storm drain, which leads directly to the ocean without treatment. Leftover soapy water should be poured down a household sink or toilet to be treated by the wastewater treatment plant.



**INSPECT AND MAINTAIN YOUR CAR REGULARLY** to prevent leakage of oil, antifreeze and other toxic fluids. Use a drip tray to catch leaks when your car is parked.



**USE ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION** such as carpooling, walking, riding your bike or using public transportation to reduce automobile pollution.

## Household & Home Maintenance



**LANDSCAPE** as much of your property as possible. Planted areas absorb more rainwater and help percolate it into the ground. Bare soil promotes water runoff. As an alternative to concrete driveways, use paving bricks, which help reduce runoff.



**TAKE** unwanted chemicals like paint and pesticides to your local hazardous waste collection center (see "Information Sources" on the back cover). Use non-toxic household products, follow the directions carefully and use sparingly. Properly store toxic products away from children. Never dump chemicals down storm drains, ditches, gutters or waterways.



**RINSE** paint brushes in the sink when using water-based latex paint. Recycle paint thinner by pouring a small amount into a sealable glass jar, cleaning brushes, and allowing paint solids to settle. Then pour clean paint thinner back into its original container. Dispose of unused paint, varnishes and solvents at the local hazardous waste collection center.



**CONTROL EROSION** at construction sites by preventing dirt and debris from entering gutters and storm drains. Use hay bales as a silt fence to prevent runoff from entering storm drains and waterways. Among other consequences, excess soil and debris from construction may increase sedimentation in our waterways, decrease available oxygen, and result in death of aquatic life.

## Lawn & Garden



**USE NON-TOXIC ALTERNATIVES TO PESTICIDES**, and use organic gardening techniques when possible. Plant native California species that need less water than imported varieties. Use herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers sparingly. Follow label instructions carefully. Do not apply products if rain is forecast. Never dump chemicals in ditches, gutters, storm drains or waterways. Never use motor oil to kill weeds along fences and in yards. Take unwanted toxic products to the local hazardous waste collection center (see "Information Sources" on the back cover).



**SWEEP** driveways, patios, and sidewalks rather than hosing them down into the gutters and storm drains. Hosing may pick up additional chemical residue. Put lawn clippings and leaves in a compost pile or green waste can.



**WATER ONLY YOUR GARDEN AND LAWN**, not your driveways and sidewalks. Divert garden hoses and rain spouts away from paved surfaces to reduce water runoff from entering storm drains. Consider using a rain barrel to collect water for flower bed and lawn watering.



**PICK UP ANIMAL WASTE** and dispose of it in the toilet or trash can, not down the storm drain. Animal waste contains bacteria that can cause illness in aquatic life, wildlife, and humans.