



# HOME AND GARDEN

## Storm Water Pollution Solution FACT SHEET 7

City and County of Honolulu  
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**Green waste and household toxics like paints and fertilizers often make their way into the City and County of Honolulu storm drain system and do not get treated before reaching our streams, wetlands and the ocean. This pollutes our drinking water and contaminates waterways, making them unsafe for people and wildlife. Follow these simple tips to prevention pollution and protect your health.**

### Car Wash

Taking your car to a commercial car wash is a good way to protect our streams and ocean. Many commercial car washes recycle the water they use and have large water filtration systems to clean the water. If you wash your car on a city street, use plain water or cleansers sparingly. A best practice is to wash your car on a lawn or gravel drive where the water will soak into the ground. Dispose of leftover soapy water in your bucket into a toilet or sink, not down the storm drain, where it flows to our streams and the ocean.

### Construction Projects

Seed or mulch to cover bare soil and disturb no more ground than necessary for a project while preserving existing vegetation and managing invasive species. Schedule grading and excavation projects for dry weather. Keep construction debris away from the sidewalk, street, gutter and storm drains. Cover excavated material and stockpiles of soil, sand or gravel to protect them from rain, wind and runoff. Sweep or scoop up cement washout or concrete dust instead of hosing into driveways, streets, gutters or storm drains. Do not throw rock, dirt or concrete in the trash. Deliver to the Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill (Ewa).



### Fertilizers and Pesticides Safely

Fertilizers and pesticides are often carried into the storm drain system by sprinkler runoff. A few tips is all it takes to prevent storm water pollution. Read the product label and use only as directed. Avoid applying near driveways or gutters. Never apply fertilizer or pesticide before a rain. Store fertilizer, pesticides and other toxic garden chemicals in a covered area and in sealed, waterproof containers. Call 768-3201 for an appointment to drop off these materials at the hazardous waste handling facility contracted by the City. Use non-toxic products for your garden and lawn whenever possible.

### Green Waste

Instead of blowing or hosing leaves, grass clippings, tree cuttings, fruits and other yard waste into the stream, clogging catch basins and polluting waterways, place green waste at the curb for recycling collection (twice/month scheduled at [www.opala.org](http://www.opala.org) or call your collection yard). Mow high and try grasscycling or leaving grass clippings on your lawn instead of using a grass catcher. The clippings act as a natural fertilizer, and because grass is mostly water, it also irrigates your lawn, conserving water.

### Household Hazardous Waste

Household products like pesticides and highly flammable substances like gasoline and kerosene are too dangerous to dump and too toxic to trash. These require special handling and should be taken to the City's hazardous waste contractor at one of the quarterly drop-off events. Call 768-3201 for an appointment. The next date is October 17, 2009.

### Painting

Use water-based paints whenever possible. Never clean brushes or rinse paint containers in the street, gutter or near a storm drain. Clean water-based paints in the sink, and oil-based paints with thinner. Wrap dried paint residue in newspaper or harden in its container and dispose of it in the trash.



### Pet Waste

Preventing this pollution is as easy as 1-2-3: Bring a bag, pick it up, and dispose of it properly, in the toilet or trash.

### Planting In The Yard

Produce less green waste and save water by planting low maintenance, drought-tolerant trees and shrubs. Using drip irrigation, soaker hoses or micro-spray systems for plants can also help reduce your water bill and prevent runoff. Consider natural landscaping.

### Used Motor Oil

The best practice is to have your oil changed by a shop that recycles their waste oil. Most shops in Hawaii will do this. If you are going to change your own oil; use an oil change box. Never use old oil to kill weeds or allow oil to go down a storm drain! When changing your oil, do it away from storm drains and have old rags around to respond in case of a spill.



### Water Conservation

Cut your water costs and prevent runoff by controlling the amount of water and direction of sprinklers. The average lawn needs about an inch of water a week, including rainfall. Sprinklers should be on long enough to allow water to soak into the ground but not so long as to cause runoff.

### Get Involved

As a resident, you can make a difference, both on the job and in your community. When you're at home, share your knowledge with neighbors and friends. To report illegal discharges or to volunteer for a project to stencil storm drains with the message, "Dump No Waste, Protect Our Waters ... For Life," or cleanup a stream or neighborhood block, go to [www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com](http://www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com), click on "Contact Us" or call 780-8872.