

## **Stormwater Phase I – Community Education**

### Stormwater Runoff can be Harmful to Streams

Every time it rains, large quantities of pollutants wash into our area streams and rivers, causing pollution that is harmful to our aquatic life and quality of streams. These pollutants include fertilizer washed from lawns, oil, antifreeze and other automotive fluids washed from the streets, soil and sediment; and even trash and litter. Many people believe that what gets into drains in the street is treated to remove pollutants and trash. In most cases, this is not true -- what goes down those drains flows directly to our streams and rivers!

Our residents and business owners can have a significant impact in reducing this pollution by thinking first before proceeding with certain activities. For instance, do not apply fertilizer to your lawn if rain is forecast in the next several days. If it rains too soon after application, the fertilizer will simply be washed away into the streams and your lawn will not benefit.

Many automotive repair shops and auto parts stores gladly accept and recycle used oil, antifreeze and batteries. These items should never be dumped down a storm drain or sewer.

Finally, storm drains should never be used to dispose of leaves or grass clippings. These organic materials contain valuable nutrients that are beneficial to plants and shrubbery. A small corner of your yard can be utilized as a compost area to allow these materials to naturally decompose and develop into rich, dark topsoil that has many uses around your yard. The process can be hastened through the use of a homemade composting bin, or commercially made compost bins can be purchased at many home improvement stores. A little prevention can have a big impact in cleaning up our area streams and rivers. Use your brain before you use the drain!