

Dear Watershed Resident:

Volunteers from Blue Thumb, 4-H, and other organizations are attaching messages like these to neighborhood storm drain inlets and curbs.



Storm water runoff (rain and snow-melt) that enters these drains flows to creeks, the rivers, and lakes. The storm water may contain pollutants as complex as man-made chemicals or as simple as dirt (sediment). Pollutants directly impact fish and wildlife, as well as drinking water for downstream communities. The "No Dumping" messages remind us to protect neighborhood springs and creeks from point and nonpoint source pollution.

What is Point & Nonpoint Source Pollution?

Polluted water exiting a sewage treatment plant or a pipe at a factory is an example of **point source pollution**.

Nonpoint source pollution (NPS), on the other hand, refers to pollutants that are washed off the land. NPS comes from many places, not just a single point. Incorrectly applied pesticides and excess fertilizer that are carried off neighborhood lawns during a rainstorm would be one example. Other types of NPS include:

Examples of NPS Pollutants:

sediment	pesticide	litter (trash)
gasoline	paint	paint thinner
fertilizer	soap	pet waste
antifreeze	motor oil	grass clippings

What Ends Up in the River?

Most homes in our larger towns are served by two kinds of sewer systems:



storm sewers (the **storm drain system**) and **sanitary sewers**.

Water moves through both systems to our streams, but there is a major difference between the two.

Read on to find out what it is!

Storm Drain System

When rain falls or snow melts on our towns and suburbs, the water washes over roofs, streets, driveways, and yards. As it flows, this **storm water runoff** picks up any pollutants that are present on those surfaces. The runoff is collected by storm drain inlets, ditches, and underground pipes that are designed to prevent street flooding. All of these water collection devices are part of the **storm drain system**. The storm drain system connects directly to neighborhood creeks that flow to our rivers and lakes. **Storm water runoff gets no treatment!**



Sanitary Sewer System

Water from your sink, bathtub, and toilet travels through underground pipes to a **wastewater treatment plant**. After it is treated to remove pollutants, it is released to a stream.

Help Keep Our Streams and Lakes Clean:

- Recycle oil, antifreeze, batteries, pesticides, fertilizers, paint, and other household pollutants. Call the Solid Waste Institute for details.
- Test your lawn and garden soil and follow OSU fertilizer application recommendations. Call County OSU Extension for details.
- Carefully follow label instructions when applying pesticides and disposing of the containers.
- Report illegal dumping incidents to the OK Dept. of Environmental Quality Hotline, 1-800-522-0206.
- Report sediment runoff (muddy water in the street) to your local Public Works or Mayor's Office. Sediment is the #1 creek pollutant!
- Maintain your car to prevent oil and other fluids from leaking.
- Use eco-friendly products & techniques for lawn & garden management and household cleaning. Call County OSU Extension for help.
- Reduce litter through education and volunteer cleanups. Call the Solid Waste Institute and OK Scenic Rivers Comm. for help.
- Clean up after your pets. Pet waste adds fecal bacteria and fertilizer to storm water runoff.

Volunteers may be marking storm drains in your neighborhood as part of a project to reduce nonpoint source pollution and improve water quality awareness. They ask you to view your lawns, driveways, storm drains, and bar ditches as the banks of the nearest creek or river.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

OK Blue Thumb Volunteer Water Quality Projects: 918-280-1598

Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission: 918-456-3251

Solid Waste Institute of Northeast Oklahoma: 918-456-0116

Conservation Districts and Natural Resources Conservation Service:

Adair Co.: 918-696-7612

Cherokee Co.: 918-456-1919

Delaware Co.: 918-253-8550

OSU Cooperative Extension Service:

Adair Co.: 918-696-2253

Cherokee Co.: 918-456-6163

Delaware Co. 918-253-4332

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Give Our Green Country a Hand



Help Prevent Urban Storm Water Pollution

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Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
in cooperation with
Oklahoma Blue Thumb Project
Oklahoma Conservation Commission
and
Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission