

**DO NOT DUMP ANYTHING  
DOWN THE DRAIN!**



**Do not pour anything down the drain – it may flow directly to inland lakes, streams or Lake Michigan!  
Polluted stormwater runoff can harm plants, fish, animals, people, and it can even pollute our drinking water sources.  
Be sure to do your part to protect water quality.**

Protect Van Buren County Lakes and  
Ground Water

[www.pawpaw.net/lake.html](http://www.pawpaw.net/lake.html)

[www.vanburencd.org/TRC](http://www.vanburencd.org/TRC)

[www.vbco.org/natfeat0002.asp](http://www.vbco.org/natfeat0002.asp)

# What Can I Do?

## Simple Tips for Protecting Water Quality at Home

☔ Use fertilizers sparingly and sweep up driveways, sidewalks, and roads.

☔ NEVER dump anything down storm drains. Take unwanted chemicals and paint to a hazardous waste collection site.

☔ Check for and fix car leaks and recycle motor oil.

☔ Vegetate bare spots in your yard.

☔ Direct downspouts away from paved surfaces.

☔ Take your car to the car wash instead of washing it in the driveway.

☔ Pick up after your pet and throw the waste in the garbage.

☔ Have your septic tank system pumped and inspected regularly.

☔ Compost your yard waste.

<http://www.deq.state.mi.us/documents/deq-wmd-swp-compostbroch.pdf>

☔ Avoid pesticides, use non-toxic gardening techniques and learn about Integrated Pest Management (IPM). <http://pasture.ecn.purdue.edu/~epados/lawn/src/pest.htm>

For waste/motor oil collection sites call: Van Buren County Extension; 219 E Paw Paw St., Suite 201; Paw Paw, Michigan; 49079-1077; United States  
Email Address: [msue80@msu.edu](mailto:msue80@msu.edu)  
Phone: 269-657-8213 // Fax: 269-657-6678

### DID YOU KNOW?

Now, more than 60% of water pollution comes from things like cars leaking oil, failing septic systems, and fertilizers from lawns, gardens and farms. All these sources add up to a big pollution problem. But each of us can do small things to help clean up our water – and that adds up to a pollution solution!

### Other tips:

- Plant native, drought tolerant, erosion-controlling ground covers instead of lawns to reduce pesticide, herbicide, and fertilizer runoff. For more information on using native plants visit [www.for-wild.org](http://www.for-wild.org).
- Use non-chlorine pool and spa alternatives. If using chlorine, add a de-chlorination product such as sodium thiosulfate before draining the water. Then drain the water onto a permeable surface such as a lawn.

keep it **BLUE**  
 only rain in the drain

# PLEASE, Only Rain Down the Drain!!!

Storm drains and roadside ditches lead to our inland lakes, streams, rivers and Lake Michigan. So, any motor oil, pet waste, leaves, grass clippings or dirty water from washing your car that enters a storm drain gets into our water without being treated.

Never dump motor oil, chemicals, pet waste, dirty or soapy water, or anything else down the storm drain or into a ditch. All of these materials pollute our lakes and rivers!

Pollutants that get into storm drains can poison fish, birds, and other wildlife, and can find their way into drinking water supplies. In addition, dirt, litter, branches and grass clippings can clog storm drains and cause flooding.

Storm drains, which are often located along the gutters of streets, are NOT sewers!

Stormwater picks up a lot of things on its way to area streams and rivers – litter, road salt, lawn and garden chemicals and more. Illegal dumping of used oil, antifreeze or gas into the storm water system poses a threat to the environment since this system discharges directly to our rivers and streams

Stormwater pollution is a continuing problem throughout the United States. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the 1996 National Water Quality Inventory indicated that approximately 40 percent of surveyed U.S. surface waters did not meet water quality standards. Polluted stormwater runoff is believed to be one of the leading sources of this contamination.

Be sure to report anyone dumping materials into a storm drain or ditch to your city, township or village officials.



**DID YOU KNOW...** Just one quart of oil poured down a storm drain can form an 8-acre oil slick on lakes and rivers.

