



Using Water Wisely to Reduce the Impact of Runoff

Environmental protection begins in your own backyard

Do's and Don'ts

- Don't waste water
- Select plants and lawns that are drought-resistant
- Reduce runoff pollution by reducing the amount of waste in your yard

Did You Know?

Only one percent of the world's water supply is usable fresh water. The rest is saltwater or frozen in the polar caps.

Arkansas produces several native plants that are drought-tolerant and need less water. They include redbud, pin oak, red cedar, honey locust and prairie wildflowers.

Arkansas is blessed with good water quality

Arkansas is more fortunate than some parts of the country that struggle with limited water supplies or waters that are too polluted for swimming or fishing.

To maintain our good water quality, we all should make conserving water a habit outdoors and inside our homes:

- Use a hose nozzle to conserve water as you wash your car.
- Water the lawn, not the sidewalk. Position lawn sprinklers to avoid wasting water and to maximize the benefit to your lawn and garden.
- Repair faucet drips and leaks.
- Water lawns wisely. Water deeply but infrequently, and water before 10:00 am to avoid losing your water to evaporation.

- Choose drought-avoiding plants that grow, flower and die back before the summer heat causes problems: daffodils, irises, poppies, pansies, and many other wildflowers.

- Choose drought-tolerant plants that sustain through the hot, dry summer: cacti, some cedars, lantana, viburnum, hollies.

- Drought-tolerant grasses include: buffalo grass and Bermuda grass.

What is runoff?

Runoff usually starts as rainwater or water from a hose that does not readily soak into the ground. This water flows from rooftops, over paved areas, and across lawns.

The flowing runoff transports soil, pet waste, pesticides, fertilizer, oil and grease, toxic wastes, leaves, litter and other potential pollutants.

What are storm drains?

Storm drains and drainage ditches are flood control devices made to quickly remove storm water runoff from your neighborhood.

Storm drains are **not** sewer systems. No treatment to clean the storm water occurs before it flows into a waterway. Polluted runoff can degrade our creeks, rivers and lakes.

Please see the back of this page for a list of easy steps you can take at home to reduce pollution from runoff.

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Arkansas Dept. of
Environmental Quality
Helpline (501) 682-0923

Arkansas Soil and Water
Conservation Commission
(501) 682-1611

Make simple changes in the ways you care for your yard and home to reduce pollution runoff

Pollution Risk	Manage Runoff Potential By...
Storage of pesticides, fertilizers	Buy only what you need; store in waterproof conditions
Use of pesticides, fertilizers	Follow application directions; avoid rain
Car washing	Use commercial car wash; or wash on lawn
Automotive wastes	Clean up spills with absorbent material like sand or cat litter; take used oil to a collection center
Pet and animal wastes	Bury waste or dispense in toilet
Grass clippings, leaves, yard waste	Sweep clippings, leaves off paved surfaces and away from water flow routes; compost yard waste or use as mulch

Thanks to these sources and websites

Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation
Commission

The U.S. Environmental Protection
Agency www.epa.gov

University of Arkansas Cooperative
Extension Service www.uaex.edu

City of Seattle www.ci.seattle.wa.us

University of Wisconsin Cooperative
Extension www1.uwex.edu

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