



Be a Watershed Hero!

No matter where you live, you live in a watershed.

The choices you make at home — in your personal piece of the watershed — reach beyond your property line. Here are some actions you can take to make a difference to your local streams and rivers!

Reduce Runoff

Rainwater washing across roofs, lawns, and driveways carries pollutants that end up in nearby waterways.

- Control soil erosion whenever you disturb the ground.
- Direct downspouts toward vegetated areas, not paved areas.
- Plant rain gardens to help rainwater soak into the ground.
- Use rain barrels to collect and store water for gardening.

Reimagine Your Lawn and Garden

Take steps toward building a livable landscape for you and the environment.

- Pick up pet waste and dispose of it properly.
- Mow high to shade out weeds and reduce the need for watering.
- Replace lawn in low-traffic areas with groundcovers, shrubs, and trees.
- Use organic alternatives to herbicides and pesticides.
- Mulch gardens to control weeds and reduce the need for watering.
- Get a soil test before you fertilize, and don't fertilize before a rainstorm.
- Compost kitchen and yard waste for an easy and free soil supplement.

Practice Watershed-Friendly Vehicle and Home Care

- Reduce your use of road salt/ice melt, a serious threat to fresh water.
- Maintain your vehicles to prevent oil or other chemical leaks.
- Visit a carwash with a water recycling system instead of washing at home.
- Pump your septic system at least once every three years.
- Limit your use of toxic products and dispose of them properly.
- Fix water leaks, wash full loads, and install water-saving devices.

Plant Native Species

If you have a stream on your property, planting a streamside forest of native trees and shrubs will help protect and restore its water quality. Streamside forests:

- Reduce the amount of pollution that reaches streams and help streams better process the pollution that does enter.
- Reduce flooding during storms.
- Lower the cost of drinking-water treatment.
- Stabilize banks and reduce erosion.
- Provide healthier wildlife habitat.
- Increase privacy and absorb noise.

Planting native species is important even if a stream doesn't flow through your yard. Native plants are adapted to your local climate, provide food and habitat for animals, are easy to grow, and are low maintenance.

Report Spills, Leaks, and Dumping

If you see potentially harmful environmental activity in your watershed report it to the Environmental Protection Agency, or local authorities.

Use These Cool Tools

Check out [WikiWatershed.org](https://www.wikiwatershed.org), Stroud Water Research Center's web toolkit for advancing knowledge and stewardship of fresh water. From a simple runoff simulation to a professional-grade watershed modeling tool, you'll find new ways to investigate your watershed!

Give to the Future of Fresh Water

Your gift to the Stroud Center helps protect our world's freshwater sources — the streams, rivers, lakes, and watersheds upon which life depends. Scan the code or visit stroudcenter.org/donate to give now.



Stroud Water Research Center produces the trusted science needed for successful stream and river conservation while fostering people's passion for the water in their lives.



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