

Helpful hints on how you can be a part of Watershed restoration!

When it rains or snow melts, water flows over Columbia's driveways, lawns, sidewalks and roads, picking up dirt, debris, chemicals and other pollutants. This dirty storm water is then diverted into storm drains where much of it is eventually discharged, **UNTREATED**, into Columbia's streams and lakes.

✓ **Clean up after your pets QUICK TIP:** Leaving pet waste on the ground allows harmful bacteria and nutrients to wash into storm drains and eventually into Columbia's streams and lakes. Remember to pick up waste and dispose of it properly. **Flushing pet waste is the best disposal method.**

✓ **Recycle Rainwater QUICK TIP:** Disperse rain collected in downspouts and gutters throughout your yard. Running downspouts into the storm drain or onto a hard surface reduces infiltration of rainwater into the ground. **By using a downspout extension, such as tubing or a downspout diverter, rainwater can be used to water gardens and trees.**

✓ **Ice Melt QUICK TIP:** Avoid applying harsh chemicals to mitigate ice. Many de-icers contain harsh chemicals that remain as residue and are carried into the storm drains as ice melts. **Only use de-icers that have eco-friendly labeling to protect Columbia's waters.**

✓ **Rain Barrel QUICK TIP:** Recycle rainwater. A "rain barrel" is defined as a container that **collects and stores rainwater from downspouts and rooftops for future use watering lawns and gardens.** A rain barrel may be located on the property provided that it is located on a downspout. Rain barrels must be made out of a durable material and must be no more than 65 gallons in size. Rain barrels can be painted and should be maintained in good condition.

✓ **Car Washing QUICK TIP:** **Wash your car at a car wash.** Commercial car washes must treat the soapy water so that it has less impact on water quality. If you wash your car at home, use only biodegradable cleaning products.

✓ **Rain Garden QUICK TIP:** Do you have a place for a rain garden? A rain garden is a manmade depression designed to collect storm water from roofs and pavement. They have a sandy soil mix and are planted with native trees, shrubs, grasses and flowers. Their purpose is to **improve water quality and to reduce the amount of water entering storm drains and streams.** Go to raingardens.org for more information.

✓ **Lawn Waste QUICK TIP:** **Keep lawn clippings and leaves out of storm drains.** Although these are organic materials, yard clippings and leaves contribute excess nutrients to Columbia's streams and lakes, which can lead to algae blooms.

✓ **Lawn Fertilizer QUICK TIP:** Should you put your lawn on a diet? Excess fertilizer is a significant source of water pollution. Read the package directions and **apply just enough for the size of your lawn.** Read more at baywise.umd.edu.

✓ **Gardening QUICK TIP:** Make your yard a bay-wise yard! **Along with reducing pollution, Bay-wise landscaping provides habitats for songbirds and other creatures.** Learn more at baywise.umd.edu.

PROTECTING & RESTORING WATERS OF COLUMBIA



THE COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION
watershed
MANAGEMENT