

Garbage Dumping



KEEP IT CLEAN

Ten simple things you can do to be part of the solution to stormwater pollution:

1. Never dump anything onto the street, down a storm drain or into a drainage ditch.
2. Pick up after your pet. Bag it and throw it into the trash.
3. Compost or bag your grass clippings and leaves for curbside collection.
4. Use fertilizers and pesticides sparingly.
5. Put litter in its place.
6. Keep your septic system maintained to prevent leaks.
7. Check your vehicles for leaks and repair them as soon as possible.
8. Always recycle your motor oil and other vehicle fluids.
9. Wash your car over a grassy area or at a commercial car wash that recycles water, not on your driveway.
10. Tell a friend or neighbor how they can help prevent stormwater pollution.

The illegal dumping of household and commercial waste in the metro Atlanta area is an ongoing issue. The improper disposal of garbage, rubble and other wastes may not seem like a clean water issue, but stormwater runoff from illegal dumping sites can carry small objects, chemicals, diseases and other contaminants like heavy metals into streams and storm drains. If you leave trash by the side of the road – even a little litter – it will not only create an eyesore but also potentially damage

waterways and harm wildlife and people. Here are just a few of the contaminants which can find their way into our water:

- **Plastics** – As items like plastic bags decay, particles of plastic are produced which run off and end up in the bodies of people and animals.
- **Paints** – Paints and chemical components of paints can wash out of old paint cans or painted objects.
- **Oils and coolants** – Old appliances, car parts and containers often contain oils and coolants, which can contaminate very large quantities of water.
- **Heavy metals** – Electronics, car and machine parts, and old paints often contain toxic heavy metals like lead and mercury which runoff carries into streams and soils.
- **Small objects** – Everything from cigarette butts and scraps of paper to rusty nails and wires can be washed away and enter the waterways, creating both environmental and safety hazards.

What can YOU do?

- Never dump trash or rubble by the side of the road, at the end of a cul-de-sac, or on unused property – it's both polluting, and a crime which can get fines and even jail time in Georgia.
- Never dump old or unused chemicals into drains, storm drains or streams – dispose of them properly.
- Avoid littering and clean it up when you see it – small pieces add up.
- Report illegal dumping to local law enforcement and/or your local utility or watershed management office.
- For more information on illegal garbage dumping in Georgia, visit [Keep Georgia Beautiful](#).