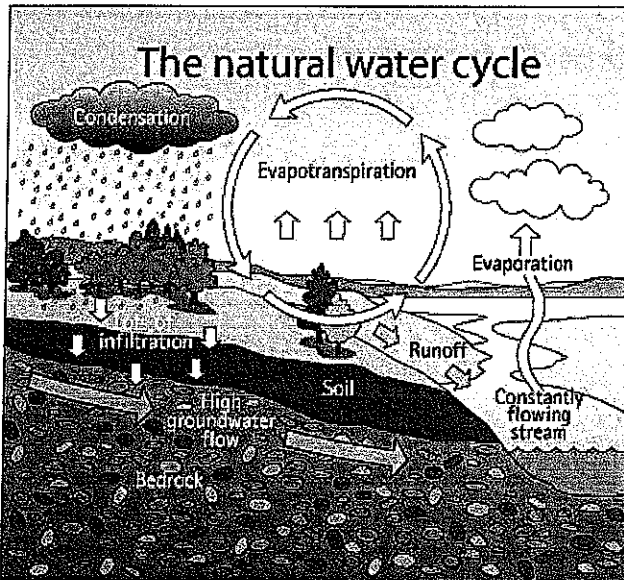


# Stormwater Fact Sheet



- ◆ **Non-point source pollution** is contamination stemming from many sources, accumulating to negatively impact stream quality. Non-point source pollutants can be discharged over a wide land area, from many different locations, and most find their way to a stream through stormwater.
- ◆ **Stormwater pollution** occurs when rain, snowmelt, or irrigation running off the land carries a variety of pollutants into local streams, either directly or through storm sewer systems. Stormwater pollution can increase our water costs and negatively impact wildlife, recreation, stream banks and storm sewer systems. It can lead to increased flooding, fish becoming inedible, the spread of pathogens and other risks to human health.
- ◆ **Infiltration** is the act of water slowly seeping down into the ground between rocks and soil particles, which supplies springs and wells. This naturally filters water and is what keeps our streams flowing.
- ◆ **Runoff** occurs when water cannot infiltrate the soil because it is blocked by hard surfaces like pavement, buildings or compacted soil. Stormwater runoff is what carries pollutants to our streams. Less runoff and more infiltration means better quality water and a more balanced water cycle.
- ◆ **Stormwater management** techniques like rain gardens and naturalized retention basins help to increase infiltration and also use plants to filter pollutants from runoff. We must protect our water resources, because although 75% of Earth is covered by water, only 1% of that is available as fresh water for human consumption.

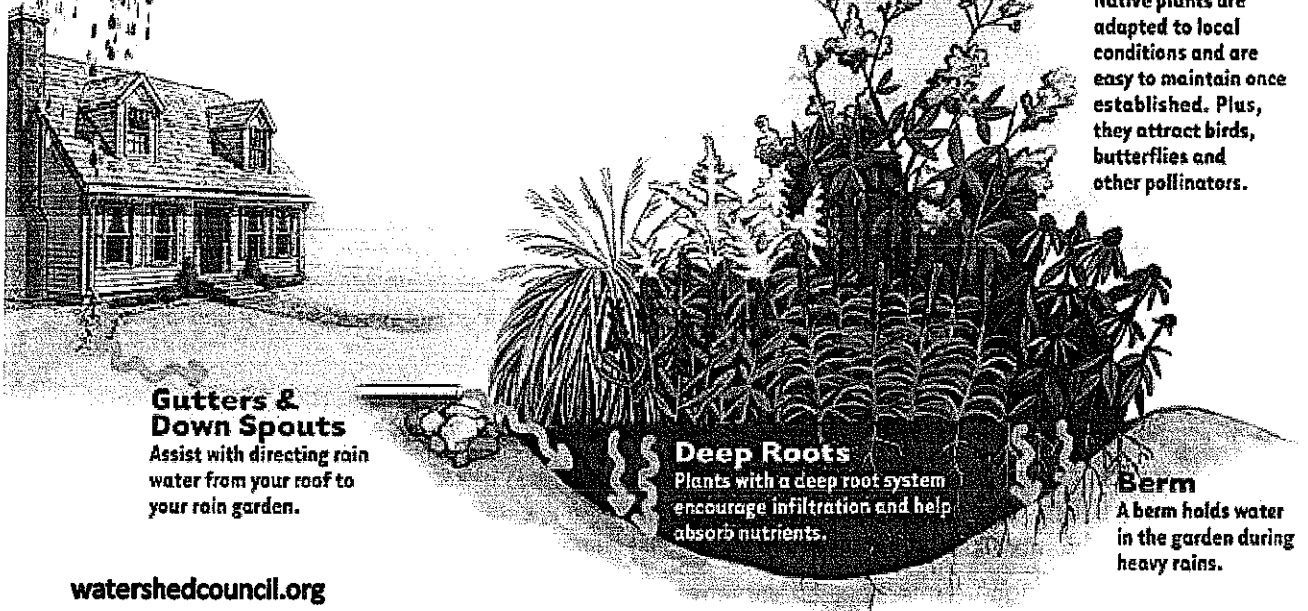


Types of Stormwater Pollution	Examples
Litter	cigarette butts, cans, tires, plastics
Chemicals	soaps, oil, fertilizers, pesticides, car fluids
Organics	grass, yard waste, pet waste, compost, leaky septic systems
Sediment	soil from bare earth, eroded stream banks, construction sites

## Easy Rules for Preventing Pollution in Our Watershed

1. Plant native plants and control non-native invasive plants.
2. Avoid bare soil so it does not erode and run off into streams.
3. Recycle your yard waste and use it as mulch, or be sure to dispose of it properly.
4. Store soil, mulch, compost, yard waste and firewood outside of the stream corridor.
5. Reduce outdoor and household chemical use, and use proper disposal methods.
6. Avoid using pesticides.
7. Wash your car at a car wash and wash other things indoors at a sink.
8. Raise your mower height to at least 3 inches and never mow within 50 feet of a stream (riparian buffer zone).
9. Bag pet waste.
10. Check your vehicle for leaks and have any fixed.
11. Make sure your septic system is working properly.
12. Do not allow yard waste, litter, or anything but water to enter a storm drain or stream.

## How does a rain garden work?



**Gutters & Down Spouts**  
Assist with directing rain water from your roof to your rain garden.

**Deep Roots**  
Plants with a deep root system encourage infiltration and help absorb nutrients.

**Native Plants**  
Native plants are adapted to local conditions and are easy to maintain once established. Plus, they attract birds, butterflies and other pollinators.

**Berm**  
A berm holds water in the garden during heavy rains.

[watershedcouncil.org](http://watershedcouncil.org)

### Rain Garden Resources

#### Rain Garden Designs

[http://lowimpactdevelopment.org/raingarden\\_design/index.htm](http://lowimpactdevelopment.org/raingarden_design/index.htm) (Select Piedmont)

#### Rain Garden Manual of New Jersey from Rutgers

[http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/library/ppt/Master\\_Gardener/Rutgers\\_Rain\\_Garden\\_Manual.pdf](http://www.maine.gov/agriculture/pesticides/library/ppt/Master_Gardener/Rutgers_Rain_Garden_Manual.pdf)

#### New Jersey Rain Garden Manual

[http://www.npsnj.org/rain\\_garden\\_home.htm](http://www.npsnj.org/rain_garden_home.htm)

#### Plant Selection

<http://www.iconservepa.org/plantsmart/plantsdatabase/index.htm>

<http://www.plantplaces.com/raingardenindex.shtml>

### Parts of a Rain Barrel

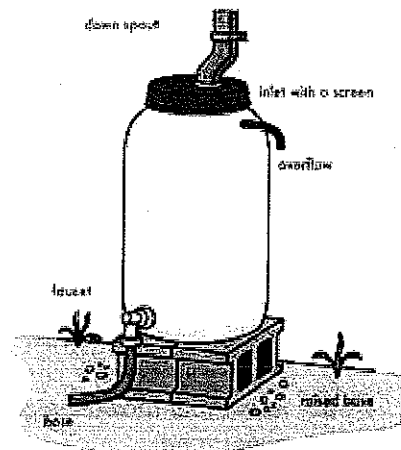
**Barrel** - must be food-grade; know what your recycled barrel used to hold! For safety, the suggested size is 55 gallons.

**Downspout** - adjusted to the height of your barrel, or attached to a downspout adapter to connect to your barrel.

**Inlet** - a downspout-sized opening in the lid of the barrel, receiving water from your downspout. A fine screen should cover this opening to keep out mosquitos.

**Faucet** - located near the bottom of your barrel to release water for use. You can attach a gardening hose here. Placing the barrel on a level, raised base allows gravity to increase the pressure in the hose.

**Overflow** - an escape route for excess water when your barrel is full. This should be located near the top of the barrel and direct water away from your foundation. This could flow into a rain garden.



Sign up for our Rain Barrel Building Workshop May 4<sup>th</sup> at

[PerkiomenWatershed.org](http://PerkiomenWatershed.org)