

## In Your Own Home

**Rain Barrels-** You can collect rainwater from rooftops in mosquito proof containers . The water can be used later on lawns and garden areas.



**Rain Gardens and Grassy Swales-** Specially designed areas planted with native plants can provide natural places for rainwater to collect and soak into the ground. Rain from rooftop areas or paved areas can be diverted into these areas rather than storm drains.

**Permeable Pavement-** Traditional concrete and asphalt don't allow water to soak into the ground. Instead these areas rely on storm water drains to divert unwanted water. Permeable pavement systems allow rain and snowmelt to soak through, decreasing stormwater runoff.



Village of Niles Rain Garden



## After the Rain

Guide to Understanding  
Stormwater Management



### Village of Niles

1000 Civic Center Drive  
Niles, Illinois

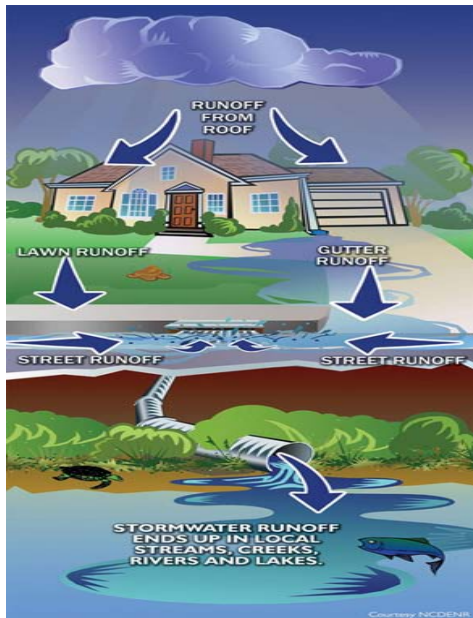
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## What is stormwater runoff?

Stormwater occurs when precipitation from rain and snowmelt flows over the ground. Surfaces such as driveways, sidewalks, and streets prevent stormwater from naturally soaking into the ground.

## Why is it a problem?

Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland or coastal water. Anything that enters a storm system maybe discharged untreated into the bodies of water we use for swimming, fishing and that provide drinking water.



## How can I help?



### **Lawn Care**

- Use pesticides and fertilizers carefully. Only use the recommended amounts. Avoid application before rain.
- Select native plants and grasses that are drought and pest resistant.
- Sweep up yard debris, compost or recycle waste when possible.
- Water during the cool times of the day and don't over water.

### **Home Repair/Improvements**

- Locate the nearest storm drains and protect them from debris.
- Sweep up and properly dispose of construction debris such as concrete and mortar.
- When using hazardous substances like paints, solvents and cleaners, use the smallest amounts possible and follow directions.
- Store substances properly to avoid leaks and spills.
- Use nontoxic, biodegradable, recycled products whenever possible.
- Clean paint brushes in a sink, not outdoors. Properly dispose of excess paints through a household hazardous waste collection program.
- Reduce the amount of paved area and increase vegetated area in your yard.



### **Auto Care**

- Use a commercial car wash or wash your car on a lawn or other unpaved surface to minimize the amount of dirty and soapy water flowing down the storm drain.
- Check all motor vehicles for leaks and spills.
- Clean up spilled fluids with absorbent material like cat litter or sand. Don't rinse the spills into nearby storm drain.
- Recycle used oil and other fluids at proper service stations. Don't dump these chemicals down the storm drain or dispose of them in your trash.

### **Pet Care**

- Pick up the waste and dispose of it properly when walking your pet. Flushing pet waste is the best method of disposal. Leaving pet waste on the ground can be a major source of bacteria and excess nutrients in local waters.

