



# Eastampton Township

New Jersey

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Dear Resident:

Last year the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection renewed the Stormwater Discharge Master General Permit for the State of New Jersey. This renewal places additional responsibilities on municipalities for stormwater pollution prevention. One of these additional responsibilities is to provide educational information to all residents and businesses within our township. By sharing these facts with you we hope you will become more familiar with stormwater pollution prevention and work with our entire community to prevent further pollution of our valuable resources.

## **Stormwater Basics**

Runoff from rain storms, melting snow or poor irrigation practices is considered stormwater. Stormwater flows into the stormwater system through storm drains also known as catch basin inlets. These storm drains are frequently located along the curbs on roadways and in parking lots.

Once below ground, the stormwater flows through pipes, which lead to an outfall where the stormwater enters a pond, creek, stream, river, lake or stormwater management basin. In most areas of New Jersey, including our community, the stormwater goes directly to local waterways without any treatment. Any materials that are on the roads or parking lots during a storm event are washed into the storm sewers and into our local waterways.

The following should never be dumped down storm drains, road gutters or catch basins: motor oil, antifreeze, pet waste, grass trimmings, leaves, debris, and hazardous chemicals of any kind. Anything dumped in our stormwater system will be carried into our local waterways.

## **What is Nonpoint Source Pollution?**

Nonpoint Source Pollution, or people pollution, is a contamination of our ground water, waterways, and ocean that results from everyday activities such as fertilizing the lawn, walking pets, changing motor oil and littering. With each rainfall, pollutants generated by these activities are washed into storm drains that flow into our waterways and ocean. They also can soak into the ground contaminating the ground water below.

Each one of us, whether we know it or not, contributes to nonpoint source pollution through our daily activities. As a result, nonpoint source pollution is the biggest threat to many of our ponds, creeks, lakes, wells, streams, rivers and bays, our ground water and the ocean.

But there's good news - in our everyday activities we can stop nonpoint source pollution and keep our environment clean. Simple changes in your daily life can make a tremendous difference in the quality of New Jersey's water resources. Here are just a few ways you can help reduce nonpoint source pollution.

**LITTER:** Place litter, including cigarette butts and fast food containers, in trash receptacles. Never throw litter in streets or down storm drains. Recycle as much as possible.

**FERTILIZERS:** Fertilizers contain nitrates and phosphates that, in abundance, cause blooms of algae that can lead to fish kills. Avoid the overuse of fertilizers and do not apply them before a heavy rainfall.

**PESTICIDES:** Many household products made to exterminate pests also are toxic to humans, animals, aquatic organisms and plants. Use alternatives whenever possible. If you do use a pesticide, follow the label directions carefully and dispose of unused product appropriately.

**HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS PRODUCTS:** Many common household products (paint thinners, moth balls, drain and oven cleaners, to name a few) contain toxic ingredients. When improperly used or discarded, these products are a threat to public health and the environment. Do not discard with the regular household trash. Use natural and less toxic alternatives whenever possible.

**MOTOR OIL:** Used motor oil contains toxic chemicals that are harmful to animals, humans and fish. Do not dump used motor oil down storm drains or on the ground. Recycle all used motor oil by taking it to a local, public or private recycling center.

**CAR WASHING:** Wash your car only when necessary. Consider using a commercial car wash that recycles its wash water. Like fertilizers, many car detergents contain phosphates. If you wash your car at home, use a non-phosphate detergent.

**PET WASTE:** Animal wastes contain bacteria and viruses that can contaminate shellfish and cause the closing of bathing beaches. Pet owners should use newspaper, bags or scoopers to pick up after pets and dispose of wastes in the garbage or toilet.

**SEPTIC SYSTEMS:** An improperly working septic system can contaminate ground water and create public health problems. Avoid adding unnecessary grease, household hazardous products and solids to your septic system. Inspect your tank annually and pump it out every three to five years depending on its use.

**BOAT DISCHARGES:** Dumping boat sewage overboard introduces bacteria and viruses into the water. Boat owners should always use marine sanitation devices and pump-out facilities at marinas.

Over the past several years the Township has adopted Ordinances for many of the items listed above. Copies of the Ordinances can be accessed on-line by going to the Township's website at [www.eastampton.com](http://www.eastampton.com), click on "Departments", then click on "Municipal Clerk" and finally click on "Municipal Code". Together with your help, we can improve the health and beauty of New Jersey's water resources.