



# Pollution Solutions FACT SHEET 1

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
TIM STEINBERGER, P.E., DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES  
1000 Uluohia Street, Suite 303  
Kapolei, HI 96707  
Environmental Concern Line: 768-3300  
Fax: 768-3289

**O**ahu is home to nearly one million residents who have a direct effect on our island environment and water quality.

## WHAT IS POLLUTED RUNOFF?

When it rains, water flows over streets and yards carrying the pollutant it picks up into storm drains. This significantly impacts the quality of the water because unlike sanitary sewers, anything dumped into the storm drain system flows directly into the nearest stream or drainage channel without any treatment to remove contaminants. Yard debris clogs storm drains, which increases the risk of flooding. Large collections of yard waste can obstruct water flow and cause streambank erosion.

As this organic matter decomposes, it uses up the oxygen needed for aquatic life survival. Decomposing organic matter also creates foul odors. With more than 20,000 storm drain inlets, and over 670 miles of storm drains to clean and maintain, we need your help.

## WHAT ARE BMPs?

Many simple yet effective methods can be used to help reduce individual runoff. These are called Best Management Practices or BMPs.

Some storm water BMPs can be implemented when first planning and building the home and designing the landscape. Other can be incorporated into day-to-day activities. The cumulative effect throughout an entire watershed can contribute to improved storm water management.

## WHAT ARE POLLUTANTS?

“Pollutant” means any waste, cooking or fuel oil, waste milk, waste juice, pesticide, paint, solvent, radioactive waste, hazardous substance, sewage, dredged spoils, chemical waste, rock, sand, biocide, toxic substance, construction waste and material, and soil sediment. The term also includes commercial FOG waste as defined under Section 14-5A.1.

**Environmental Concern Line 768-3300**  
**Help protect our waters ... for life!**



We can have a positive impact on our environment by minimizing runoff that drains into streams, estuaries, and the ocean. Sound environmental practices begin at home and at work.

## 9 POLLUTION TIPS

- 1. Keep It Clean:** It is your responsibility to keep sidewalks, curbs and gutters in front of your property clean.
- 2. Dump No Waste:** Stencil storm drains with the message, “Dump No Waste, Protect Our Waters ... For Life,” and keep waste materials from polluting our waterways.
- 3. Do It Right:** Use water-based paint and dispose property.
- 4. Don't Be An Oil Drip:** Identify and fix oil leaks on your vehicle; clean up drips and spills with absorbent material; dispose of used oil in an oil change box.
- 5. Car Wash:** Wash your car where the water drains to a vegetated area; if you wash your car on a City street, use soap sparingly, a spray gun with flow restriction or a bucket and sponge to minimize runoff and save water.
- 6. Cover Up:** Prevent soil and debris from leaving your property.
- 7. Read The Label:** Read and follow the label on all fertilizers and pesticides. The label is the law.
- 8. Yard Maintenance:** Gather grass, leaves, and yard trimmings for proper disposal or composting.
- 9. Pick It Up:** Remove and dispose of pet waste before you leave an area.



**D**ischarging pollutants to the storm drain system is against the law. Violations of the Clean Water Act can result in fines of up to \$25,000 per violation, per day.

**K**now the law to avoid fines. The Clean Water Act gave the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the authority to implement water pollution control programs. In an effort to comply with the EPA's mandate, the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu, Section 14-12.23(a) Environmental Quality Control - Violation states, "It shall be unlawful for any person to discharge or cause to be discharged any pollutant into any drainage facility which causes a pollution problem in state waters, or causes a violation of any provision of the city NPDES permit or the water quality standards of the State of Hawaii."

## Be A Part Of The Solution

The City and County of Honolulu, working under Federal Clean Water Act Guidelines, has a number of public education programs that focus on community involvement and targeted enforcement to eliminate or reduce illegal discharge practices. Existing projects such as the City's Storm Drain Stenciling Campaign; Earth Month Everyday Clean Water Hero Campaign (teen video, radio); Earth Day Mauka to Makai Clean Water Expo; Pearl Harbor Bike Path Cleanup; Make A Difference Month; World Water Monitoring Day; Adopt-A-Stream/Adopt-A-Block education and cleanups; Hawaii Backyard Conservation booklet, "The Journey Home" activity books; Good Neighbor Awards; Adopt-A-Stream/Adopt-A-Block Volunteer Leader Workshop; and "Healthy Stream/Healthy Yard" homeowner workshops, provide opportunities to educate and train an interested and committed neighborhood.



## Report It, Who to Call

As a resident, you can make a difference, both on the job and in your community. When you're at home, share your knowledge with neighbors and family. As you drive to work, report any illegal discharge.

Honolulu Storm Water Public Education-Outreach: 768-3248  
Honolulu Storm Water Illicit Discharge (already occurred): 768-3247  
Honolulu Storm Water NPDES Permit: 768-3287/768-3242  
Honolulu Storm Drain Connection License: 768-8106  
Honolulu Potential Flood Problem: 768-7890  
Honolulu Residential Code Enforcement: 768-8280  
(complaint investigations related to zoning and housing code for one and two family dwellings, sidewalk maintenance, vacant lot overgrowth)  
Spill Response (Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response)  
- Local (HFD): 911  
- State (HSERC): 586-4249 (business hours), 247-2191 (after hours)

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[www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com](http://www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com)  
[www.opala.org](http://www.opala.org)  
[www.honolulu.dp.gov](http://www.honolulu.dp.gov)  
[www.honolulu.gov/dfm/index.htm](http://www.honolulu.gov/dfm/index.htm)

### SIDEWALKS, CURBS AND GUTTERS

- Do keep sidewalks, curbs and gutters around your property clean by sweeping up debris and disposing of it in the trash prior to hosing with plain water. Direct wash water to a planted area so the wash water can soak into the ground.
- Use dry sweep or rags to absorb oily residue followed by washing afterwards with clean water. If runoff cannot be directed to a planted area, wash in an open area, but keep the water on your property and use a storm drain inlet protector, if possible. Remember, it is a property owner's responsibility to keep these areas clean.

- The Revised Ordinances of Honolulu (ROH), Section 14-20.1 Cleaning and Maintaining Sidewalks, Driveways states, "Every property owner whose land abuts or adjoins a public street shall continually maintain, and keep clean, passable and free from weeds and noxious growths, the sidewalk and gutter areas."

### SEDIMENT

- Schedule grading and excavation projects for dry weather. Cover excavated material and stockpiles of soil, sand or gravel to protect them from rain, wind and runoff.
- Keep construction debris away from sidewalks, streets, gutters, and storm drains.
- Sweep or scoop up cement washout, concrete dust, or mud rather than hosing into driveways, streets, gutters or storm drains.
- Direct runoff from bare ground to vegetated or stabilized areas to minimize erosion.
- Maintain all erosion (ex: preservation of existing vegetation) and sediment (ex: silt fence) control practices until all outside construction activities are completed and soil is stabilized with vegetation, mulch or gravel.
- Inspect sediment control practices after each storm event, making any needed repairs immediately. Remove sediment from behind silt fences and storm drain inlet protection devices as needed.

### YARD WASTE

- Contain yard waste and place it at the curb for recycling collection. Prevent blowing or hosing of grass clippings, leaves, fruits, tree cuttings and other yard waste into the storm drain. Prevent dumping of yard waste in drainage channels.
- Use fallen leaves for mulching. Compost your biodegradable wastes.
- Grasscycle! Leave grass clippings on lawn after mowing. The nitrogen from the clippings acts as a natural fertilizer.
- Download a copy of the Hawaii Backyard Conservation booklet at [www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/learning\\_center/hawaii-backyard.html](http://www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com/storm/learning_center/hawaii-backyard.html)

### USED MOTOR OIL

- A best practice is to have your oil changed by a shop that recycles their waste oil.
- If you change your own oil, use an oil change box. When changing your oil, do it away from storm drains and have old rags around to respond in case of a spill.
- Never use old oil to kill weeds or allow oil to go down a storm drain.

### PET WASTE

- Bring a bag, pick it up, and dispose of it properly, in trash.
- Also visit the Hawaiian Humane Society web site at [www.hawaiianhumane.org/animallaws/index.html](http://www.hawaiianhumane.org/animallaws/index.html).

### PAINT

- Dispose of small quantities generated at home with your regular household rubbish.
- Latex paint can be hardened in the can, then thrown away.
- Oil-based paints must be solidified with an absorbent material, such as shredded paper or old rags then sealed in a plastic bag. An oil change box provides the same results.
- Never clean brushes or rinse paint containers near a storm drain.

### PESTICIDES AND FERTILIZERS

- Read the product label and use only as directed.
- Never apply fertilizers or pesticides if rain is expected within 24 hours.
- Use fertilizer and pesticides sparingly. Be careful not to spread fertilizer on sidewalks and driveways. They can runoff and pollute waterways. Store under cover, off the ground, to prevent contact with water.
- Use organic fertilizers such as manure, mulch, or compost. Organic fertilizers increase the capacity of the soil to retain water and reduce runoff. The key to good nutrient management in your backyard is a reliable soil test; go to [www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/ctahr2001/PIO/FreePubs.asp](http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/ctahr2001/PIO/FreePubs.asp) or call 956-6706.
- Landscape with plants that require less water and few pesticides.

### CAR WASH

- One of the best practices is to use a commercial car wash that treats or recycles the wastewater. Some use only 3 gallons of fresh water to rinse each car.
- Use only enough of a cleaning product to get the job done.
- Wash your car in an area that allows the water to soak into the ground, such as grass or gravel. If you wash your car on a City street, use soap sparingly, a spray gun with flow restriction or a bucket and sponge to minimize runoff and save water. Residential car washing uses up to 150 gallons of water with the hose running. Fast wet down and rinsing quickly can reduce use to 50 gallons.
- Dispose of the dirty, soapy water in a utility sink, grass or gravel.
- If runoff cannot be kept on your property, it may be directed into the sanitary sewer cleanout.
- Charity car washes are allowed with consideration of BMPs.

### HAZARDOUS WASTE

- Avoid having household cleaning products become hazardous waste by buying only what you need and using it.
- If you are unsure about how to dispose of a material, call 768-3201 to find out how to dispose of a product.