



Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Landscaping, Gardening, and Pest Control

Storm drains are intended to drain rain water from our streets and to prevent flooding. When this rain, along with water from households (such as landscape water) mixes with urban pollutants that include oil, paint, pet waste, pesticides, litter, and other automotive fluids, it becomes polluted urban runoff. Unfortunately, because this water is not filtered or treated before it enters our rivers and waterways, storm drains also serve the *unintentional purpose* of transporting this urban pollution, contaminating our waterways, harming aquatic life, and increasing the risk of flooding by clogging gutters and catch basins.

Some potential pollutant sources during landscaping, gardening, and pest control activities include dirt/soil/rocks/bark/other landscaping material making it into the storm drain system, vegetation removal, herbicides/insecticides/fertilizers, and over-watering. Sediment is the most common pollutant washed from landscaping work sites. It can clog storm drains, leading to flooding, and can create multiple problems once it enters the river. Sediment can clog the gills of fish, blocks light transmission and increases a river's water temperature, all of which harm aquatic life and disturbs the food chain upon which fish, animals, and people depend.

You can help prevent stormwater pollution during landscaping, gardening, and pest control activities by remembering the following:

- Do not over-water. Conserve water by using irrigation practices such as drip irrigation, soaker hoses, or micro-spray system. Over-watering will cause run off that carries yard waste, pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers into the storm drain system.
- Recycle tree clippings and pruning waste.
- Do not blow or rake leaves into the street, gutter, or storm drain.
- Plan landscaping activities during dry weather.
- Protect storm drains when doing excavating to prevent sediment from entering the storm drain system.
- Protect stockpiles of materials with tarps or temporary roofs to protect them from rain and wind erosion.
- Place "pruned refuse" for pick up away from the gutter to minimize potential for storm drain intrusion (see MMC 4-7.1102).
- Use your green waste can to dispose of grass clippings and other yard waste that is not pruned refuse as defined in MMC 4-7.1102.
- Use fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides that are organic or non-toxic and follow all directions for use.
- Store fertilizer in a protected area to prevent run off.
- Plant California-native, drought resistant or low water using plants, flowers, shrubs, and ground cover.
- Plant vegetation in dirt/exposed areas that have a potential for erosion.

Alternatives to Pesticides:

- Physical Controls
 - Caulking holes that pests can get into
 - Create barriers to pests
 - Remove pests by hand picking
 - Use traps
- Biological Controls
 - Predatory insects (see brochure "The 10 Most Wanted Bugs in Your Garden")
 - Bacterial insecticides

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- Chemical Controls
 - Dehydrating dusts (e.g. silica gel)
 - Insecticidal soaps
 - Boric acid powder
 - Horticultural oils
 - Pyrethrin-based insecticides

If you must use chemicals:

- Use a pesticide that is specifically designed to control your pest. The insect should be listed on the label. Approximately 90% of the insects on your lawn and garden are not harmful.
- Read labels and use only as directed. Many home gardeners use pesticides at over 20 times the rate that farmers do.
- Do not use pesticides if rain is expected.
- Never use pesticides near water bodies, creeks, or rivers.
- Be prepared for spills. Clean up all spills using absorbent materials (such as kitty litter) and then dispose of all waste properly.

Disposal of chemical containers:

- Chemical containers that still have product in them cannot go in your regular trash. They are hazardous waste and must be disposed of properly.
- Empty chemical containers must be rinsed prior to disposal. The rinse water should be used in your garden just the same as the original chemical. It cannot go down the drain.

Recycling and Hazardous Waste Disposal

*City of Modesto
Solid Waste Management
(209)577-5494*

*Stanislaus County
Household Hazardous Waste Facility
(209)525-4123*

***To report a clogged storm drain, spill, or illegal dumping, or for more information:
call City of Modesto Environmental Services 24/7 at (209)577-6200***