



MYSTIC RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION  
20 ACADEMY STREET, SUITE 203  
ARLINGTON, MA 02476

August 5, 2008

Dear Conservation Commission:

The Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) has put together the enclosed materials to educate the public about non-point source pollution. The materials were compiled through our Find-It-and-Fix-It program, a three-year effort to address stormwater pollution in the Mystic watershed. This program has been executed in conjunction with the Charles River Watershed Association and is funded by the Massachusetts Environmental Trust.

Our shoreline survey work (in which teams of citizen volunteers walked the banks of the Mystic and its tributaries, lakes and ponds) and our water testing has identified several non-point-source pollution issues in the watershed. They include nutrient loading from fertilizer runoff, elevated bacteria counts from dog waste, and oil and grease pollution from urban runoff. Our enclosed brochures educate citizens about these problems and how they can help.

It is our hope that your Conservation Commission can promote the distribution of the materials that are appropriate for your city or town. Some towns in the watershed have already included certain brochures in mailings of water bills or dog permit renewals, for instance. Another town is putting the large dog waste sign on laminated street-sign boards at locations where dog-walking is popular. Other venues for distribution may include literature racks at municipal halls, environmental tables at town days, or town meetings related to environmental issues. Please note these distributions may in part satisfy public education requirements of the NPDES program.

We have PDF versions of these brochures on our website ([www.mysticriver.org](http://www.mysticriver.org)) for you to download and distribute. Please let us know if there is any way we can be of further assistance by contacting Kim Provo or me at (781) 316-3438.

Sincerely,

Steve Murphy  
Find-It-and-Fix-It Program Manager



# Your dog's poop doesn't belong in the river.



Image by the Washington State Department of Ecology, King County, and cities of Bellevue, Seattle, and Tacoma.

## But that's where it goes when you leave it on the ground.



Dog waste contains bacteria and nutrients that degrade water quality in rivers and streams. Please pick up after your dog.

Visit [www.MysticRiver.org](http://www.MysticRiver.org) for more information.



# MATERIALS THAT ARE HARMFUL AND UNACCEPTABLE FOR STORM DRAIN DISPOSAL

- Soapy or oily vehicle washwaters.
- Automotive fluids
- Wastewaters from controlling overspray or dust in the paint booth, degreaser, washoff, wet sanding, radiator flushing, floor washdown, mop water, etc.
- Solvents, cleaners, paints and absorbents.



ANY AND ALL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND WASTES MUST BE DISPOSED OF PROPERLY.



## WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

Although these practices may seem difficult and time consuming, your shop and business can benefit in the long run. How?

- **Use fewer** parts cleaners or portable baths, not only to reduce waste, but save money. If you filter the parts cleaners, you can reuse them.
- **Organize** the chemicals you use. Only keep what is needed in the short term, properly store and label all materials, and use waste collection stations that are labeled and convenient for all shop employees to increase efficiency.
- **Reduce and recycle** refrigerants and antifreeze to save money.
- **Never mix** used oil with antifreeze or other chemicals or fluids, and use drip pans to collect oil. A recycler will usually pick it up for free.
- **Maintain a clean work area** free of debris and wastes to create a better and safer working environment.

In addition to contributing to a healthier river, these steps are designed to help you **save time, money, and avoid possible fines.**

**Tell your customers** that your shop takes care to implement these **Best Management Practices** to protect the Mystic River and local environment.

The Mystic River Watershed Association  
[www.MysticRiver.org](http://www.MysticRiver.org)  
781-316-3438

# THE AUTO INDUSTRY & WASTEWATER

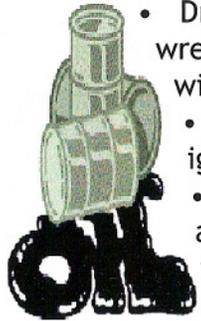
## IN THE MYSTIC RIVER



- **Chemicals, oils, paints, and solvents used in your shop create huge problems for the Mystic River and surrounding environments.**
- **Every time it rains, these chemicals are washed into the storm drain, and from there they flow directly into the river.**
- **While it may not seem like much, these substances are being flushed into the river from hundreds of locations every day.**
- **By using the following Best Management Practices, or BMPs, your shop has the ability to make a substantial change in helping the environment.**
- **Furthermore, by minimizing waste and conserving materials, you can also reduce costs to your business.**

# BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

## Controlling Spills and Leaks



- Drain fluids from leaking or wrecked vehicles as soon as possible, with drip pans and plastic tarps.
- Transfer drained fluids to a designated waste storage area.
- Place bulk fluids, waste fluids, and batteries in secondary containment to capture accidental spills.

## Waste Reduction and Recycling

- Recycle automotive fluids, solvents, cleaners, absorbents, and washwaters when the useful life is finished.
- Mix only the amount of paint needed.
- Use self-contained sinks and tanks when cleaning with solvents.
- Reuse water used in flushing and radiators.

## Properly Managing Wastewaters

- Wastewaters must be collected for off-site disposal or discharged to the sanitary sewer, if permitted. Examples include wastewaters from controlling overspray or dust in the paint booth, degreaser washoff, wet sanding, radiator flushing, floor washdown, mop water, or other uses.
- Soapy or oily vehicle washwaters must be either collected for off-site disposal or discharged to the sanitary sewer.



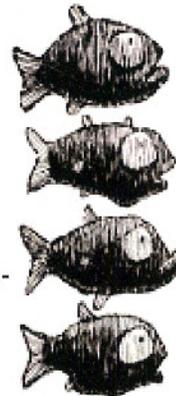
- Never wash dangerous solvents or chemicals into floor drains.
- Seal the floors with a sealant that allows you to mop up spills instead of rinsing them. If you do have a floor drain, make sure that there is an oil/sediment separator.

## Properly Managing Raw and Waste Materials

- Follow all hazardous materials and hazardous waste storage and disposal requirements.
- Oil or solvent-saturated absorbent must be managed as a hazardous waste.
- Make sure solid waste containers are in good condition and secured against wind, leakage, or vandalism.

## Protecting Storm Drain Inlets

- Label storm drain inlets on your property to alert employees and customers that no dumping of harmful fluids or washwaters is allowed.
- Prevent accumulated pollutants from washing down storm drains by inspecting drains on premises frequently.
- Remove debris and dispose of it in the trash.
- Never wash down areas with hoses and avoid using blowers, which only displace residues.
- If work or materials storage must be done outdoors, prevent potential pollution of rain and runoff by covering and/or berming work areas.



## Notify and Train Employees to Practice Pollution Prevention

- Post notices of appropriate practices such as those in this flyer, and train employees on their use.
- Set up a system to make it easy to separate, store, and recycle wastes.



# ENVIRONMENTAL

- Soaps, chemicals, solvents, paints, antifreeze, oils, and other runoff and hazardous materials can be poisonous.
- These substances alter the acidity, cleanliness, and the balances of nutrients, microbes, and bacteria.
- If plants are unable to grow, various animals and fish are left without habitats and food.

# & Human

- After storms when polluted rainwater flushes into the river, people cannot fish, swim, or enjoy other recreational activities in the river.
- Polluted rainwater can be absorbed through the soil and into the groundwater

# Impacts

# Why should you care what happens to your trash?

Litter is much more than unsightly. What happens to all the trash on the street when it rains?

- Trash clogs pipes. Clogged pipes cause flooding, which increases pressure on other pipes, which also have the potential to clog. Flooding disrupts traffic, is a health hazard, and can ruin your basement.
- Trash accumulates in the river. Buildup of garbage in a river disrupts the flow of water, ruins habitats for various wildlife, and poisons the water as it breaks down. Materials like plastic and styrofoam never biodegrade and remain in the ecosystem permanently.

What should you do?

- Don't litter - wait to find a trash can.
- Take out your trash correctly. Make sure bags are tied and lids are securely fastened.
- Recycle.



## Summary

- Check your car regularly for leaks, and when repairing your car contain all hazardous fluids.
- Never leave dog waste or trash on the street.
- Always deal with garbage properly - tie trash bags and fasten the lids to your garbage cans.
- When washing your car, be sure to use soap sparingly or take your car to a carwash.
- Vegetate bare areas in your yard to reduce runoff, and avoid chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
- Remember - everything that enters storm drains is flushed directly into water bodies, untreated.



## More Information

This information was distributed by the City of Chelsea and brought to you by the Mystic River Watershed Association.

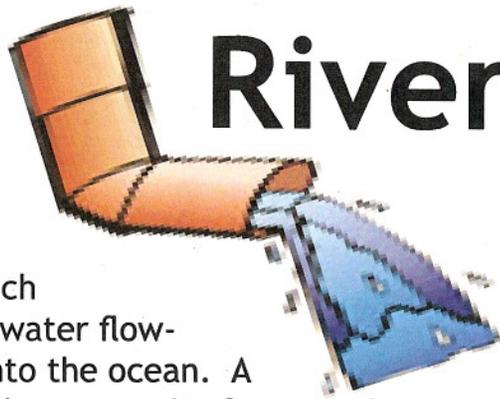
For membership information, donations, or just to learn more, call (781) 316-3438 or visit [www.mysticriver.org](http://www.mysticriver.org)



Mystic River Watershed Assoc.  
20 Academy Street, Suite 203  
Arlington, MA 02476-6401

Marsha Allen  
Conservation Commission  
1 Metcalf Square  
Winthrop, MA 02152

# How can Rainwater be Poisonous for a River?



A river is much more than water flowing into the ocean. A river is a necessity for animals, a habitat for fish, and a source of recreation and income for many people. Protecting a river is more than maintaining a delicate balance of plants, animals, nutrients, and microorganisms. When you protect a river you protect the lives and lifestyles of people and creatures. However, every time it rains, dirt, debris, oil, garbage, animal waste, soap, and fertilizer are flushed over pavement, down storm drains, and into the river - destroying the health of this valuable resource. Your everyday actions can have a huge impact on what gets washed into the river every time it rains.

# When does Fixing your Car endanger Fish Habitats?

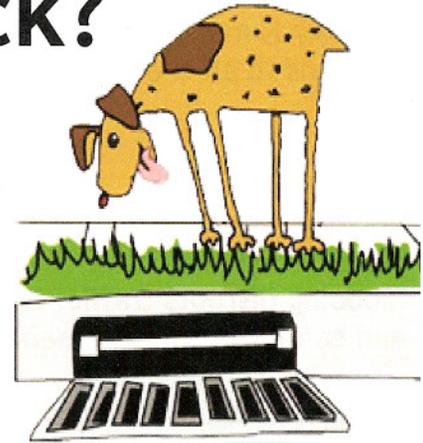


Fixing your car at home can save you a lot of money, but auto maintenance can cause huge problems for the river when oil, antifreeze, gasoline, and paint wind up in the storm drain. Follow these steps to reduce waste and prevent pollution.

- Place containers to collect oil and gasoline leaks.
- Dispose of excess or expired fluids like paints and solvents properly - store them until you can take them to a facility.
- Never wash down areas with hoses or blowers - these simply displace hazardous materials.
- Make sure your garage is safe by checking containers for leaks, placing catch basins, and use buffers to collect solvents, chemicals, and washwaters.
- Have a system which makes it easy to separate, store, and recycle wastes.
- Always remember that washwaters, automotive fluids, paint, solvents, paints, cleaners, and absorbents are toxic and are unacceptable for stormdrain disposal.

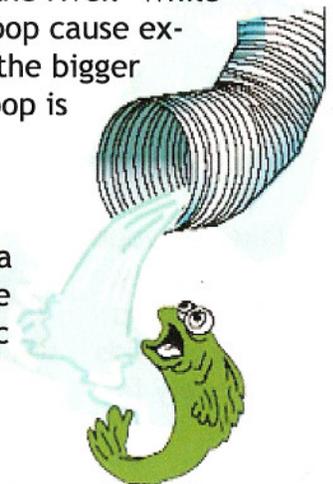
# How can Walking Your Dog mean making someone Sick?

Picking up dog poop isn't fun - no question. However, it's a lot grosser to fish, swim, and boat in water with dog poop in it.



Dog poop doesn't stay on the ground for long. The next time it rains it winds up in the river. While the nutrients in dog poop cause excessive algae growth, the bigger problem is that dog poop is loaded with bacteria.

Next time you take your dog out, do a favor for all the people who swim in the Mystic River. Pick it up, and throw it in the trash.





Please  
pick  
up  
my  
poop.

Know what's grosser than picking  
up dog poop?

Stepping in it.  
Know what's even grosser than that?

Swimming in, fishing from, and  
boating in water that has  
dog poop in it!

Please pick up after your pooch.

Cleaning up pet waste is good for your health  
and the environment! Seriously.

Pet waste left on the ground, especially near streets  
and sidewalks, gets washed into storm drains and  
drainage ditches which flow to our local  
waterways...**without being treated!**

Bacteria, parasites, and viruses found in pet waste  
can be harmful to water quality and human health.  
Not only is picking up after your pooch the  
neighborly thing to do, it's the healthy thing to do...  
for you and the environment!



Image by the Washington State Department of Ecology, King County,  
and cities of Bellevue, Seattle, and Tacoma. Postcard design and text by  
the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources.



Sponsored by the Mystic River Watershed Association  
[www.mysticriver.org](http://www.mysticriver.org) or 781-316-3438