

Watershed Storm Drains Can Carry Pollutants to Lakes



Omaha City Councilman Franklin Thompson marks a storm drain with the Zorinsky Lake Watershed Council.

Did you ever wonder where the water goes that enters the storm drains in a City of Omaha lake's watershed?

A watershed is the area of land that drains into a city lake. As rainfall, melting snow, and excess runoff water from our homes, streets, sidewalks runs downhill, it carries sediment and other pollutants into the storm drains which empty into our lakes.

Lake water quality and marine life are directly affected by wastes that enter watershed storm drains. The careless dumping of motor oil, anti-freeze, paint and other wastes causes problems in our lakes. Rainwater, snowmelt or excessive irrigation runoff can also pick up litter, yard waste, and excess fertilizers and pesticides. When these pollutants enter our lakes by way of watershed storm

drains, they eventually affect lake water quality and aquatic life and habitat. This is known as nonpoint source (runoff) pollution.

Runoff pollution originates from a variety of sources: improper or excessive application of lawn fertilizer and pesticides, the careless dumping of motor oil, anti-freeze and paint, rainwater, snowmelt and excessive irrigation runoff picking up litter and yard waste, pet waste, vehicle leaks and automotive product spills on driveways and streets, debris from construction sites, and washing cars with chemicals and high phosphate soaps.

**DON'T BE A PART OF THE SOURCE.
PRACTICE RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR.
DON'T DUMP INTO STORM DRAINS.
MINIMIZE POLLUTION SOURCES ON YOUR PROPERTY.**