

Do Your Part. Be SepticSmart!



How does a septic system work?

- Wastewater exits your home through a pipe into the septic tank
- Sludge settles at the bottom of the tank while grease and water float to the top of the tank
- An outlet pipe directs the water through a series of drainfield lines that filters it before releasing it into the groundwater

What can I do to prolong its life?

- Pump your septic tank every 3-5 years
- Install water-saving fixtures and repair leaks
- Plant ONLY grass over the drainfield
- Avoid driving or parking on the drain field
- Stagger water use throughout the week
- Do NOT dump grease or paint down your drains
- Limit the use of harsh chemicals, such as bleach

What are signs of septic system failure?

- Wet drainfield, even in dry weather
- Lush growth over the drainfield, even during drought
- A strong odor coming from your yard
- Slow-draining toilets or sinks

Rain gardens can turn this...



...into this!



Funding and Opportunities:

- Local Soil and Water Conservation District
- Dominion Energy Environmental Education
- Walmart Local Community
- James River Association Buffer Program
- Department of Environmental Quality
 - Clean Water Assistance
 - Stormwater Local Assistance Fund
 - Nonpoint Source Funding
 - Citizens Monitoring Grant
- National Fish and Wildlife Fund Small Watershed Grant
- Virginia Outdoor Foundation
- Virginia Save Our Streams
- Contact the Commonwealth Regional Council to discuss more opportunities



Stormwater Pollution



Problems, Solutions, Funding Sources

**COMMONWEALTH
REGIONAL COUNCIL**

1 Mill Street, Suite 202, Farmville, VA 23901
(434) 392-6104 or (434) 392-6105
Mfoster or krobertson@virginiasheartland.org

What is Stormwater Runoff?

Stormwater runoff is the water that flows across the land from a storm event (rain and snowmelt). This is the water that is not absorbed by grass and soil and that runs off impervious/paved surfaces. As it moves, it collects pollutants and carries them directly into our waterways.

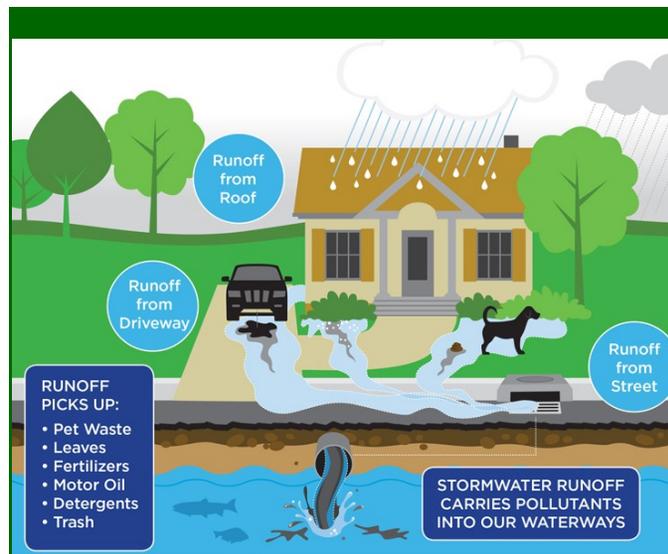


Top 10 Items Found in Waterways

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Cigarette butts | 6. Bottle caps |
| 2. Food wrappers | 7. Glass bottles |
| 3. Plastic bottles | 8. Straws, stirrers |
| 4. Aluminum cans | 9. Foam cups/plates |
| 5. Plastic bags | 10. Balloons |



A 1,600 sq. ft. roof sheds 1,000 gallons of stormwater during a 1 inch rain. A grassy lawn of the same size sheds only 150 gallons of stormwater runoff.



What can I DO?

- Cover all trash, including brush piles and compost
- Take used oil to a designated recycling center
- Keep stormdrains and ditches clear of any debris
- Clean up after pets and dispose of waste appropriately
- Perform vehicle maintenance to prevent oil and fuel spills
- Cut down on costs and pollution by reusing water
- Collect rain water by making rain barrels
- Plant trees and shrubs to slow runoff, contain sediment, and filter pollutants
- Address any erosion areas on your property



DON'T:

- Use fertilizer unnecessarily or before a rain storm
- Burn debris in ditches
- Pour hazardous materials, paint, oil, etc. onto the ground or into stormdrains or ditches
- Let fluids run out of vehicles onto the ground
- Let maintenance lapse on buffer zones and erosion control
- Forget to maintain your septic system

Stormwater is NOT treated! The stormdrain system and ditches are separate from the sewer system and goes directly into the local waterways, completely untreated.

Useful Apps

- **Swim Guide:** Check water quality reports for your favorite swimming spots



- **Clean Swell:** When doing a stream cleanup, simply click the items as you collect them

- **Water SCIENCE Monitor:** Developed for schools to send in water samples and obtain results for basic water health tests