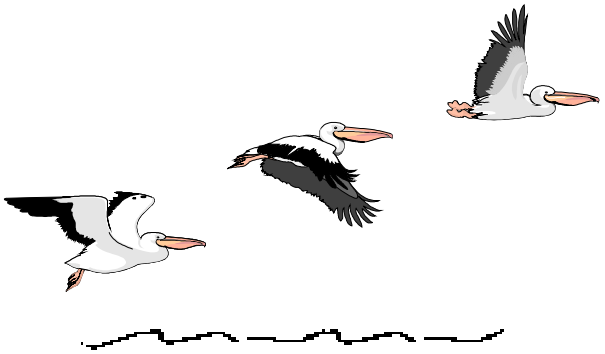


Only Rain Down the Drain

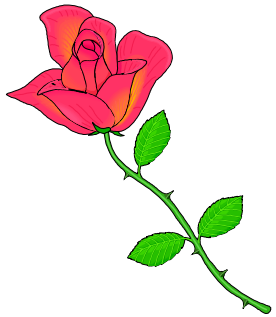
Storm drains are designed to carry only rainwater. Therefore, they flow directly to local creeks, the San Lorenzo River, and into Monterey Bay without receiving any type of treatment. Storm drains are separate from the City's sanitary sewer system, which treats wastewater from your sink, toilet, and other indoor drains.

Whether you live right next to the ocean or not, polluted runoff from your home will eventually reach Monterey Bay through the storm drains or the nearest creek.

Even if polluted runoff doesn't immediately reach the storm drain or the water evaporates, the problem isn't gone. Pollutants still remain on the pavement and will be washed into the storm drain the next time it rains.

Storm water pollution is toxic to fish and other wildlife, and it degrades our beaches and ocean. The tips in this brochure will help you reduce pollution from your home activities and protect our environment.

For more information, call the City's Environmental Compliance Inspectors at 420-6050 or the Environmental Projects Analyst at 420-5160.



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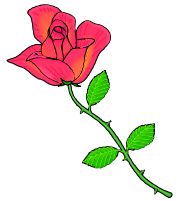
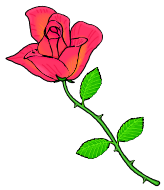
Garden, Pool and Spa Maintenance



Pollution Prevention Tips

CITY OF SANTA CRUZ

Tending Your Garden, Pool & Spa and the Environment



Garden and Landscaping

Eliminate the use of pesticides and herbicides, if possible. Try using "natural" alternatives first!

- Use pesticides and herbicides only if there is an actual problem–not as a preventative measure.
- Try not to buy large containers of pesticides unless they will be completely used up.
- Use the minimum amount of pesticides or herbicides necessary for the job, and be sure to read the label on the bottle.
- Do not mix or prepare pesticides or herbicides near a storm drain.
- Be careful not to over-apply pesticides or apply them before it rains. Rain can carry pesticides into our streets and storm drain inlets.
- Don't dump leftover pesticides or herbicides into a street or storm drain! Also, do not dump them down the sink since they are hazardous and the City's wastewater treatment plant was not designed to treat them. So, either give leftovers to a neighbor or dispose of them as a household hazardous waste.
- For information on pesticide or herbicide disposal, call the County's Household Hazardous Waste Program at **454-2606**.
- Collect lawn and garden clippings, prunings, and tree trimmings. Compost, put them in your *GreenCycle!* cart, or drop them off at the City's Resource Recovery Facility.

- Do not blow or rake leaves into the street.
- Do not over-water plants. Runoff water can carry soil, fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides into the storm drain.
- Try planting native species in your yard. They will generally grow better and require less water and less pesticides or herbicides.
- If you hire someone to landscape your yard or maintain your garden, make sure that they follow these pollution prevention tips.

Pool and Spa Maintenance

Never discharge swimming pool or spa water to the street, gutter, or storm drain!

- Discharge swimming pool and spa water into the sanitary sewer, preferably via a sewer "clean out" on your property. If you don't have a clean out, the water may be pumped into an appropriate drain in your house.
- Swimming pool and spa water may be slowly drained to landscaping or lawns as long as the water does not run off into the street or storm drain. Prior to draining, allow enough time since the last addition of chlorine to ensure that the chlorine has been "off-gassed" or broken down.
- Do not clean pool or spa filters in the street, over a catch basin or near any other type of storm drain.

Pollution prevention can be easy—most of the time it only involves making small changes in the way you do things around the house and in your yard.