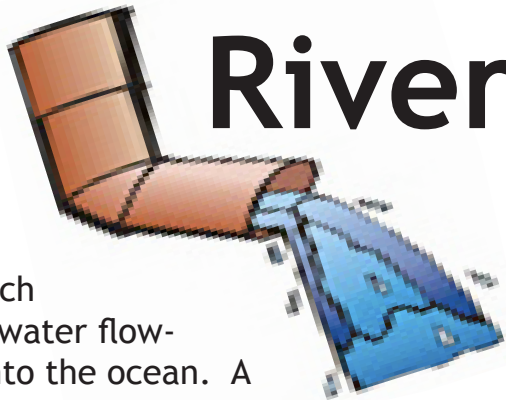


# How can Rainwater be Poisonous for a River?

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?

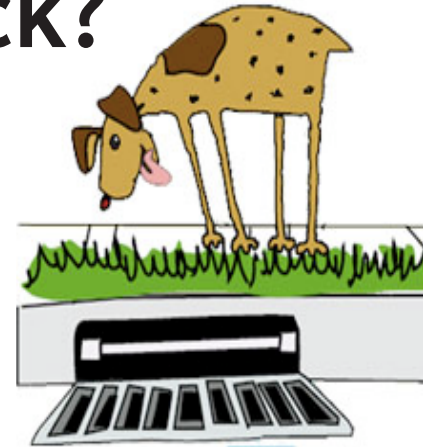


Fixing your car at home can save you a lot of money, but auto maintenance can cause huge problems for the river when oil, antifreeze, gasoline, and paint wind up in the storm drain. Follow these steps to reduce waste and prevent pollution.

- 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, cleaners, and absorbents are toxic and are unacceptable for stormdrain disposal.

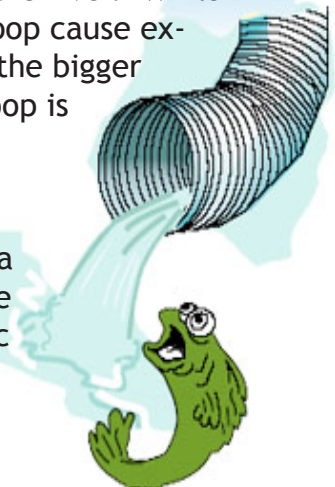
# How can Walking Your Dog mean making someone Sick?

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.



# 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)