

Think Blue: Top Tips



Healthy Yards and Healthy Families

Before beginning an outdoor project, locate the nearest storm drain and take action to protect it from debris. This may require you to sweep the gutter between your project and the storm drain, before starting work. Chemicals, fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides can be harmful to you, your family, plant and animal life.

- Use them sparingly. Read labels carefully and don't apply if the forecast calls for rain.
- Use mulch instead of herbicides to prevent weeds from growing and to help absorb water.
- Select drought resistant native plants that conserve water and prevent runoff.
- Don't overwater your lawn. Water during the cooler times of day and don't let it run off into the gutter.
- Drain swimming pools only when chlorine levels are not detected by your swimming pool test kit.
- Keep your gutters in front of your house clean of leaves and grass cuttings. Sweep up debris instead of hosing down your driveway.



Helpful Habits Around the House

- If you use hazardous substances such as paints, solvents and cleaners, use them sparingly, according to directions. Store properly to avoid spilling.
- If you use water-based paints, rinse paint brushes in the sink. For oil-based paints, filter and reuse paint thinner. Dispose of all used paints and materials through a hazardous waste collection program. Never clean brushes or pour paint in the gutter or storm drain.
- If you use other hazardous substances such as cleaners and solvents, properly dispose through a hazardous waste collection program.
- Pick up trash and litter around your yard and home.
- If you're working on a home improvement project, dispose of drywall, concrete and mortar in the trash. Don't rinse concrete or mortar into the street. Sweep up all project debris.
- Pick up pet waste and dispose in the toilet or in a bag for the trash. Bacteria from pet waste contains harmful bacteria that pollutes our waterways. Remember "Scoop the Poop!"



Vehicle and Garage Safety

- Routinely check your car for leaks and keep it tuned up. Car pooling or using a bicycle for transportation helps reduce pollutants on our streets.
- Never pour any chemicals or other hazardous substances from cars down a storm drain, on to the ground or leave on driveways or parking lots.
- When changing fluids from your car, drain into a clean container and seal completely. Take the oil and the oil filter to a used oil collection site.
- If you spill fluids, contain quickly with rags or kitty litter. Safely dispose at a hazardous waste collection site.
- If you wash your own car, use a shutoff nozzle on your hose and use detergents and water sparingly. Wash your car on a landscaped surface.

Important Resources

City of San Diego Household Hazardous Materials Program Information: (619) 235-2111

- Dates and locations of household hazardous waste collections
- Locations for recycling motor oil
- Information on safe use and storage and substitutes for commonly used household products

Poison Control Center: (800) 876-4766 (call 911 in an emergency)



www.Thinkbluesd.org

The CITY OF SAN DIEGO thanks the following partners for their generous support of the Think Blue program:

San Diego Port District

Port of San Diego

www.portofsandiego.org

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This information will be made available in alternative formats upon request.



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



Easy Solutions for Keeping Our Creeks, Bays and Ocean Clean





When it rains or when water flows out of yards, it flows directly into storm drains. You've probably seen storm drains on our San Diego streets. Many people think that everything that flows into a storm drain gets treated, just like wastewater in a sewer system, but actually these two systems are not connected.

Everything that flows down into a storm drain goes untreated directly into our creeks, bays, lagoons and ultimately the ocean. Storm water can consist of pesticides, fertilizers, pet waste, litter, oil and other automobile fluids, soil erosion and household chemicals. Some of these pollutants flow into storm drains unintentionally, but many items are carelessly thrown directly into storm drains. The Clean Water Act prohibits disposal of wastes and pollutants into creeks, bays, lakes and oceans.

These pollutants have harmful effects on recreational areas, waterways and wildlife. Some of San Diego's most popular beaches have been closed because of storm water pollutants. Ultimately, storm water pollution harms all of us because we depend on our waterways for recreation and to support San Diego's tourist industry. By preventing pollution from occurring in our homes, neighborhoods and businesses, we can protect our environment and our families' health and safety.

You and your family play an important role in storm water pollution prevention. This brochure provides you with easy and inexpensive tips to prevent pollutants from entering storm drains in the first place. If everyone makes a few simple changes, we can help protect our San Diego lifestyle and environment. "Think Blue" means preventing pollution before it reaches our waterways.



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Port of San Diego

www.portofsandiego.org



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For more storm water pollution prevention information or a referral to your local hazardous waste collection program call:

1-888-THINK BLUE or 1-888-844-6525
In the City of San Diego call: **619-533-3793**