

# STORMWATER

Tip of the Week

Week 3: Jan. 19th, 2021

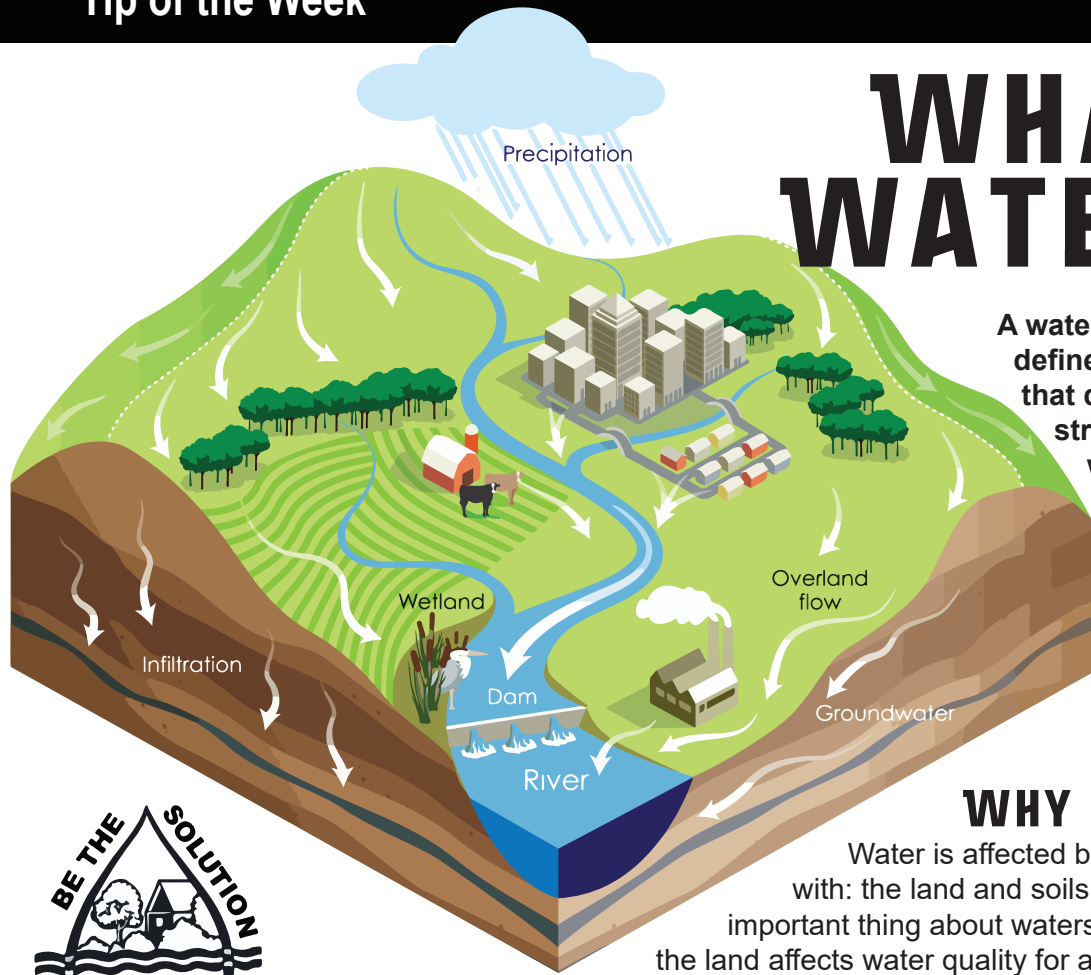
## WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

A watershed is a basin-like landform defined by highpoints and ridgelines that descend into lower elevations and stream valleys. A watershed carries water "shed" from the land after rain falls and snow melts. Drop by drop, water is channeled into soils, ground waters, creeks, and streams, making its way to larger rivers and eventually to the sea.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Water is affected by all that it comes in contact with: the land and soils which it travels. The most important thing about watersheds is that what we do on and to the land affects water quality for all communities living downstream.

Clean and safe water is the most valuable and needed resource for life not only for humans but also for wildlife, aquatic life, and our environment.



## HOW CAN I HELP?

- Don't use antibacterial soaps or cleaning products. Most of these contain trichlosan, a registered pesticide that has been found to harm aquatic life. Regular soap and water kills germs just as effectively.
- Never flush unwanted or out-of-date medicines down the toilet or the drain. Find out if your city has a site or program to collect unwanted pharmaceuticals.
- Don't put anything except water down storm drains. These drains carry storm water to our local waterways.
- Fix leaks that drip from your car and put down a liner in your driveway to collect oil and other materials.
- Avoid using pesticides or chemical fertilizers.

- Choose non-toxic household products whenever possible.
- Pick up after your pets. Like other contaminants, pet waste can run down the storm drains, spreading bacteria.
- Don't pave your property. The more pavement there is, the more rain water will simply run off down the storm drains, picking up pollutants on the way and causing flooding.
- Planting native plants allows more water to soak into the ground can help prevent flooding, recharge groundwater supplies, and dilute contaminants.
- Spread the word and be a water advocate. Talk to your neighbors about how they can help too, and work with your community to help make changes to better your watershed.