

STORMWATER

Tip of the Week

Week 33 August 17, 2021

WHAT DOES STORMWATER AFFECT?



Stormwater literally affects every aspect of life on the planet, from the rivers and streams where the water drains to in many cases, to the wildlife and indigenous plants that occupy our watersheds and call them home. Take a look at the illustration above and how each area (farm, city, construction, suburb, etc.) affects the watershed with their stormwater runoff.



EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

Everyday activities such as driving, maintaining vehicles and lawns, disposing of waste and even walking pets often cover impervious surfaces with a coating of various harmful materials. Eventually every drop of oil, sediment particle, chemical, or trash and debris that comes to land on pervious surfaces across the world will be relocated by stormwater. These pollutants of concern will ultimately come to reside in watersheds, the home of so many different plants and animals.

RUNOFF CAN AFFECT EVERYTHING

Drinking Water - As watersheds become more contaminated, the cost people will need to pay for drinking water will continue increase.

Natural Areas - Changes in land use that increase impervious cover lead to flooding, erosion, habitat degradation and water quality impairment. Things like construction sites, power plants, failed septic systems, illegal discharges and improper sewer connections all contribute substantial amounts of pollution to runoff can be detrimental to our waterways and lives.

Flood Control - As more impervious surfaces are built, the volume of stormwater runoff being contributed to the natural waterways also increases. Water that would otherwise have been able to soak into the ground and eventually reached the water table is instead directed straight to rivers, lakes and streams that are not designed to handle this increase- in turn causing flooding.