

# STORMWATER RUNOFF

## The Impacts of Stormwater Runoff

In natural environments, most of the water from melting snow or heavy rainfall events gets absorbed by trees and plants. The excess water that has not been absorbed or evaporated runs off towards watercourses.

In our towns and villages, natural habitats have been replaced by non-absorbent surfaces, such as rooftops, paved parking lots and streets and compacted lawns. During heavy rainfall or snow melts, these surfaces prevent water from being absorbed into the ground.

This stormwater runoff picks up a wide range of pollutants found on the ground, such as nutrients (from fertilizers), pesticides, road salt, petroleum products, and animal waste. During rain and snow melt, these pollutants are washed into storm drains and ditches. They eventually make their way into streams and rivers that flow into the Shediac Bay.

Stormwater runoff also contributes to bank erosion and sediment transportation into aquatic habitats. Furthermore, it can cause flooding, which can lead to damage in municipal and residential infrastructure.



Stormwater runoff carries a variety of pollutants in streams and rivers



## Preventing Pollution in Our Rivers

Water quality degradation is mainly caused by pollutants in stormwater runoff. The sources of this pollution are many and include industrial activities, agriculture and urban development. Pollution is also caused by our daily activities like applying fertilizers, pesticides, washing our cars, etc.

By taking measures to absorb rainwater, you contribute to reducing runoff and improving water quality.

### Here are 10 steps you can take to help prevent stormwater runoff:

- Plant indigenous species in your yard; they require less water, fertilizer, and pesticides
- Install rain barrels at the ends of your downspouts to collect water from your roof
- Replace sections of your lawn with landscape structures or gardens
- Visit a rain garden and learn how to build one of your own
- If you live near a river, plant native trees, shrubs, and plants along the bank
- Limit your use of fertilizer and pesticides. Avoid using them altogether if the forecast predicts rain
- Sweep your walkways and driveway, rather than washing them with water
- Pick up your pets' waste
- Wash your vehicle on a non-paved surface, such as your lawn
- Help us spread the message by sharing your responsible actions



Rain garden construction

### The Shediac Bay Watershed Association, in collaboration with its partners and community volunteers, has taken a series of initiatives aiming to reduce the impacts of stormwater runoff:

- Free distribution of 100 rain barrels to residents living in the communities around the Shediac Bay region
- Construction of a rain garden and an interpretation sign explaining how it works
- Workshops and presentations on stormwater management
- Workshop on the construction of a rain barrel

Visit our website or follow us on Facebook to learn more.  
[www.shediacbassociation.org](http://www.shediacbassociation.org)



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