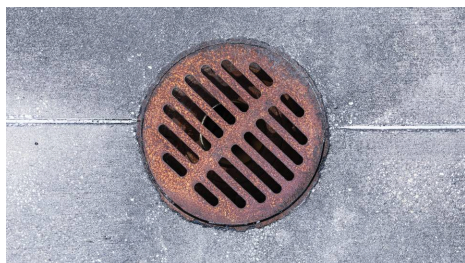


# 10 Ways to Reduce Your Water Quality Footprint at Home



Non-point source pollution comes from various sources. It is caused by rainfall or snowmelt picking up and carrying pollutants to water bodies. This water is termed stormwater, and our daily activities can add pollutants to the runoff. While our individual homes may contribute only small amounts of pollutants, they add up to bigger problems downstream. Learn about 10 ways you can implement practices that promote clean water quality below.

## References

1. Safety fact sheet household hazardous waste (HHW): A guide to disposal. (n.d.). Utah Safety Council. Retrieved September 1, 2023, from [https://www.utahsafetycouncil.org/uploads/PDFs/Household-Hazardous-Waste\(1\).pdf](https://www.utahsafetycouncil.org/uploads/PDFs/Household-Hazardous-Waste(1).pdf)
2. Zaneti, R., Etchepare, R., & Rubio, J. (2011). Car wash wastewater reclamation. Full-scale application and upcoming features. *Resources, Conservation and Recycling*, 55(11), 953–959. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2011.05.002>

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Household chemicals consist of any chemical used in the household- including cleaners, care products, pesticides, and fertilizers. The improper disposal of these products can lead to increased nutrient levels in bodies of water. Always follow the instructions of the product label for

correct use and disposal. In addition to those guidelines, follow these suggestions:

- Buy only enough chemical for the immediate job, or share unused products with neighbors and friends
- Never dump leftover chemicals in your backyard, in the trash, down the sink or toilet, or in storm drains
- If left with extra chemicals or paint, locate an approved chemical disposal location. These are generally located at landfills or public works offices- such as the local health department. The Logan Landfill Household Hazardous Waste Facility allows you to drop off household chemicals for free [1].
- Properly dispose of unused prescription drugs by utilizing a drug take back program. [Locations](#) around or near Cache Valley include:
  - Lee's Marketplace Pharmacy in Smithfield
  - Logan Clinic Pharmacy
  - USU Police Department
  - Logan City Police Department
  - Budge Clinic Pharmacy
  - Hyde Park City Office
  - Hyrum City Office
  - Cache County Sheriff's Office
  - Tremonton Police Department
  - Brigham City Police Department
  - Brigham City Community Pharmacy
  - North Park Police Department
  - Rich County Courthouse
- White vinegar and baking soda have been used for generations of cleaning, and are less toxic than many products available today
- Check out the [EPA's](#) "Safer Choice" and "Designed for the Environment" programs to identify cleaning products that have been found to promote environmental health
- Avoid cleaners that are "greenwashed"- companies imitating the EPA's Safer Choice Designation with vague labeling

Commercial car washes employ multiple methods to reduce water consumption and prevent contamination of stormwater. For example, many car washes use gray water for certain car wash cycles, using only clean water for the final rinse [2]. Commercial car washes may also remove solids from the water and dispose of it safely in a landfill. Many chemicals used in the upkeep of vehicles are poisonous when ingested by humans and wildlife. Some, like anti-freeze even have a sweet smell that can attract pets or children. Never pour or rinse chemicals

into storm drains- they drain directly to streams! To prevent accidental runoff into bodies of water, be sure to use a tarp when performing car maintenance and store hazardous chemicals in a self-contained bin in case of a leak. Properly dispose of car batteries at car part retailers or a proper hazardous waste facility. Fertilizer and pesticide products contribute to the eutrophication of bodies of water. To lessen your impact:

- Use only the recommended amount of fertilizer- more is not better
- Choose slow-release forms of nitrogen fertilizer to prevent leaching. In most cases you do not need phosphorus in turf fertilizer.
- Use pesticides as a last resort; A steady stream of water can wash insects off plants; insecticidal soaps and oils are a low-toxic alternative that don't harm most animals or birds
- Keep fertilizers and pesticides off of sidewalks

Prevent the pollution of stormwater by reducing the amount of water that travels on the surface. It is much easier for surface water to be contaminated than it is for ground water. Promote the infiltration of water into soil by:

- Reducing the area of impervious surfaces in your yard by replacing concrete with pavers, gravel, or an open-graded concrete option
- Selecting native and xeriscape plants, which require less water, fertilizer, and pesticides
- Installing a rain garden or infiltration beds
- Using organic mulches, such as wood chips, in flower beds to reduce weeds and conserve water

Conserve water by establishing an efficient water schedule that follows water restriction guidelines and reduces evaporation of irrigation water. Ensure that your irrigation system is not directing water to paved surfaces. Collecting and storing rainwater from your property reduces the amount of runoff and can help to reduce the non-point source pollution leaving your property. Utah residents may collect up to 200 gallons of rainwater without registering with the division of Water Rights and up to 2,500 gallons with registration. Pet waste contains high concentrations of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, and can transport harmful bacteria. Carry a pet waste bag with you to pick up your pet's waste, and properly dispose of it in a trash bin. Promote water quality when recreating by:

- [Properly disposing of human waste](#) by digging a cathole or packing it out depending on the environment and property requirements.

- Disposing of RV and camper waste at approved dump stations
- Using biodegradable soaps for personal hygiene and dishes when camping