

Runoff Pollution

80% of pollution to the marine environment comes from land based sources, such as runoff pollution. Runoff pollution includes many small sources, like septic tanks, cars, trucks and boats, plus larger sources, such as farms, ranches and forest areas.

Millions of motor vehicle engines make daily, one-drop-at-a-time "oil spills" onto roads and parking lots, which add significantly to runoff pollution.

Some water pollution actually starts as air pollution, which settles into waterways and oceans.

Dirt can be a pollutant. Top soil or silt from fields or construction sites can run off into waterways, harming fish and wildlife habitats.

How it Affects You

Non-point source pollution, commonly called runoff pollution, can make river and ocean water unsafe for humans and wildlife. In some areas, runoff pollution is so bad that it causes beaches to be closed after rainstorms. In 1992, for example, some beaches were closed or advisories were issued against swimming about 3,000 times.

Drinking water supplies can be contaminated by polluted runoff, as can coastal waters containing valuable fish stocks. Experts think there is a link between agricultural runoff and water-borne organisms that cause lesions and death in fish. Humans who come in contact with these polluted waters and affected fish can also experience harmful symptoms.

More than one-third of the shellfish-growing waters of the United States are adversely affected by coastal pollution.

Correcting the harmful effects of runoff pollution is costly. Each year millions of dollars are spent to restore and protect areas damaged or endangered by non-point source pollutants.

What You Can Do

Don't pour oil, engine fluids, cleaners, or household chemicals down storm drains or sinks. For more information on proper disposal of household hazardous waste, click on the MS.

Department of Environmental Quality

link: www.deq.state.ms.us/mdeg.nsf/page/Recycling_HouseholdHazardousWasteFAQs?OpenDocument

- Find approved motor oil and household chemical recycling or disposal facilities near your home, and make sure your family and friends use them.
- Use lawn, garden and farm chemicals sparingly and wisely. Before spreading chemicals or fertilizer, check the weather forecast for rain so they don't wash away.
- Repair automobile or boat engine leaks immediately.