



Renew Our Waters

Every choice counts.

Vehicle Maintenance

Get where you need to go **and** minimize the impact on local waters.

We don't think much of jumping in the car and running to the store. You may have heard that air quality is affected by vehicle emissions but have you realized that our quick trips affect our area waters? Read these tips. Help us change one habit at a time so that we can enjoy good fishing, swimming, paddling and waterskiing when our running about is done.

WASHING

When you wash a car in a driveway or street, wash water flows into the storm sewer system and directly to local rivers - along with dirt, emissions and detergent. You can avoid this by using a commercial car wash, where systems direct wash water to the local wastewater treatment facility and oil, grease, detergent, sand, and grime are removed.

If you must wash your car at home, use biodegradable soap, wash it on your lawn or on other unpaved areas to keep runoff out of storm sewers or ditches, and dispose of leftover washwater in the toilet or sink.

When you're tempted to put off repairs or the six-month maintenance check, think again. When your car performs better, our waters fare better, too.

MAINTENANCE

From time to time, we've all noticed an oily sheen on water in streets and parking lots. It's the result of small leaks, accumulated residues, and fuel overfills from our cars. When a vehicle is maintained, fewer leaks spill onto streets and highways and fewer contaminants enter our streams.

So when you're tempted to put off repairs or the six-month maintenance check, think again. When your car performs better, our waters fare better, too.

MINDFUL DRIVING

We all know air quality is affected by vehicle emissions. But did you know emissions can also affect water quality? Tiny particles emitted from tail pipes settle on roadways, wash into storm sewer systems, then flow into rivers and streams. Their impact may seem small, but when you consider all the vehicles traveling on our roads, the impact is clear.

Street sweeping can minimize the impact of this pollution but rain and melting snow still carry contaminants to storm sewers. One way we can reduce this pollution is to drive less. Plan trips so you accomplish several things at once. Use public transportation. Even better, walk or ride your bike.

Stormwater is rain or snowmelt and water from things people do, like washing the car or watering the lawn. As water makes its way to the storm drain it picks up pollutants like oil from car leaks and bacteria from pet waste. When we choose products carefully and dispose of products properly, we can greatly reduce the amount of pollution that enters our local waters through runoff.

Untreated runoff is the biggest threat to our nation's water quality, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Let's make the small, important changes that will reduce that threat and improve water quality and our lives!

Realize

What touches the ground enters the water

Northeast Wisconsin Stormwater Consortium

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