

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

The following good housekeeping practices help reduce the volume of stormwater created and help prevent pollutants from coming in contact with stormwater.

AUTOMOBILE MAINTENANCE

- Keep your vehicles (and any other motors) serviced regularly by a qualified mechanic.
- Clean up fluid leaks with cat litter and put an absorbent rag or carpet remnant under the leak to absorb the fluid until it is fixed.

CAR WASH

- Take your vehicle to a local car wash that recycles and reuses the wash water and uses non-toxic cleaners.
- If you have to wash your vehicle at home, park your car on a grassy or pervious area, use a non-toxic soap, and minimize the amount of water that you use by running the hose only when you need it.

"GREEN" YARD CARE & LANDSCAPING

- Reduce the square footage of your lawn area by planting low-maintenance ground-covers, trees, flowers, and shrubs to help water infiltrate into the ground and prevent soil erosion.
- For new lawns, use 6" - 12" of topsoils to encourage deeper root growth.
- Choose native grasses and ground coverings as alternatives to conventional turf lawns on some or all of your property. Native plants have evolved and originated in your area and generally require less water, herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, and trimming.
- Test your soil to see what it really needs before you apply fertilizer or lime (contact your county UNH Cooperative Extension office for information on soil testing).
- When fertilizer is necessary, use a slow-release fertilizer to avoid excess nutrients running into the water.
- If you have an automated irrigation system, make sure that it has a rain gauge or soil moisture sensor to prevent watering when it isn't necessary - like when it is raining or immediately following a rain shower.
- Aerate your lawn to help the soil breathe and promote stronger root systems.
- Raise and keep your lawn mower at a height of 7.5 cm (3 inches).

REDUCE IMPERVIOUS COVER

- Leave mulched grass clippings on your lawn to naturally fertilize and prevent evaporation to reduce the amount you need to water.
- Maintain natural vegetation and buffers around your property.
- Sweep up the yard waste and other materials from your driveway using a regular broom or, if that is too difficult, use a shop vacuum to collect the material.
- Limit the amount of impervious surface created on your property.
- Replace impervious surfaces with natural, native ground cover or materials that allow rain water to seep into the ground such as gravel, brick, stepping stones, wood chips, or other porous surfaces.
- Direct runoff from impervious areas to pervious ones. For example, direct the downspout from your roof gutter away from your driveway and instead into a vegetated area such as a swale or garden area.

SEPTIC SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

- Know the location of your septic tank and leach field area.
- Have your tank inspected yearly. If the sludge and surface scum combined are as thick as $\frac{1}{3}$ the liquid depth of your tank, have it pumped out by a licensed septage hauler.
- Keep bulky items like diapers, sanitary pads, cigarettes, and paper towels out of the system as they will cause clogging.
- Keep toxic materials like paint thinners, pesticides, and bleach out of your system. The chemicals could kill the good bacteria that live in your septic tank that keep it functioning.
- Do not use septic tank additives. They could be harmful to the bacteria.
- Repair leaking faucets and fixtures promptly to reduce the amount of water the system has to treat.
- Avoid putting food waste and grease into the system or using a garbage disposal. Food waste in your system would require more frequent pumping and can leach nutrients into the soils surrounding your leach field.
- Keep deep-rooted trees and bushes away from the leach field.
- Keep vehicles, equipment, and heavy foot traffic away from the leach field to avoid compacting the soils.
- Use alternative cleaning products, such as baking soda and borax, to avoid chlorine and strong acids that could kill the good bacteria in the septic system.

WINTER WALKWAY AND DRIVEWAY MAINTENANCE

- Reduce the amount of salt that you apply to your driveway and walkways.
- Use only sand to provide traction.
- If you have multiple entries to your home, designate one of them as the "winter entrance" and only maintain the walkway that serves that door.

PET WASTE

- Take the time to "scoop the poop" and dispose of it properly.
- Pick up pet waste. Flush it down the toilet, put it in the trash, or bury it in the yard at least 5" deep and away from vegetable gardens and waterways.
- Do not put pet waste into storm drains.
- For more information, see [DES Scoop the Poop Campaign](#).