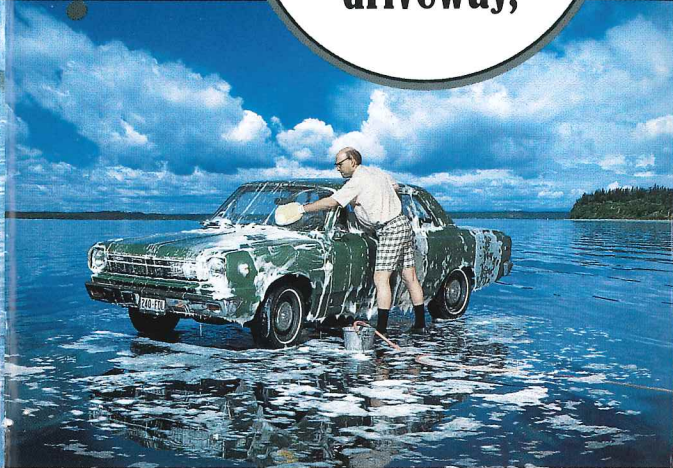




**When you're washing your car in the driveway,**



*...you're not just washing your car in the driveway.*

If you wash your car on the street or driveway, soap, scum, and oily grit will be washed into nearby storm drains and into lakes, streams, and Long Island Sound without any treatment. This causes pollution that is unhealthy for fish and people.

So how do you avoid this mess? Wash your car on grass or gravel surfaces instead of on paved streets. Or better yet, take it to a commercial car wash where the water is treated and recycled.

**When your pets go on the ground,**



*...they're not just going on the ground.*

If pet waste is not properly disposed of, that waste is washed into nearby storm drains by rain or melting snow. Pet waste can be a source of bacteria. Storm sewers drain directly into lakes, streams, and Long Island Sound, delivering bacteria and other pollutants to the water.

So what to do? Take a pooper scooper or plastic bag along on your next walk. Flush only the waste, or if local law allows, seal it in a plastic bag and dispose of it in the garbage.

**When you're fertilizing the lawn,**

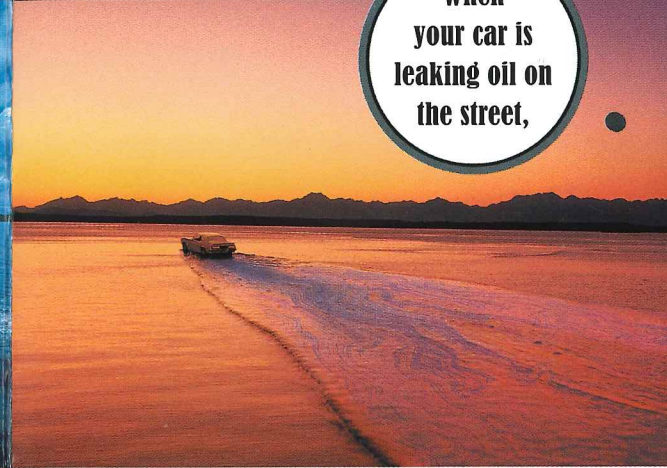


*...you're not just fertilizing the lawn.*

If you apply fertilizer just before a rainstorm, much of it will be washed into nearby storm drains and into lakes, streams, and Long Island Sound without any treatment. Once in the water, fertilizers spur a growth and decay process in algae. The algae then use up oxygen, which fish need to survive.

So when you fertilize your lawn, avoid applying it before a rainstorm, use it sparingly, and use organic, slow-release fertilizers.

**When your car is leaking oil on the street,**



*...it isn't just leaking oil on the street.*

When oil leaks from our cars onto streets and driveways, it is washed into nearby storm drains and eventually makes its way into lakes, streams, and Long Island Sound. Picture the number of cars in your area and imagine the amount of oil that finds its way from leaky gaskets into our waterways.

So please, fix oil leaks and never dump motor oil or other engine fluids down storm drains or onto the ground.

# Step by Step

A citizen's guide to curbing polluted runoff

longislandsoundstudy.net  
Partnership to Restore and Protect the Sound

Visit these web sites for information about polluted runoff



Long Island Sound Study: [www.longislandsoundstudy.net/runoff](http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net/runoff)

Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection: <http://dep.state.ct.us/wtr>

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation: [www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dow](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dow)

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: [www.epa.gov/nps](http://www.epa.gov/nps)

## Be a Part of the Pollution Solution!

### What is Polluted Runoff?

Polluted runoff occurs when it rains or when snow melts. Water washes over roads, parking lots, lawns, and sidewalks, removing oil, debris, soil, and fertilizer from those surfaces. The water and pollutants then flow directly into waterways, or into nearby storm drains and are carried—untreated—to our rivers, lakes, and oceans.

In recent years, sources of water pollution originating from industrial and sewage treatment plants have been greatly reduced. If we want to continue to make progress, more effort is needed to control polluted runoff, such as oil leaking from cars or fertilizer washing off lawns. And remember, don't dump! Only rainwater should go down a storm drain.

## Help Clean up Long Island Sound.

### A Clean Long Island Sound is Important to All of Us.

You don't have to live near Long Island Sound for your actions to affect its water quality. Oil spilled within the Sound's watershed may eventually find its way into the Sound. The environmental impacts from polluted runoff are gradual, but severe. The cumulative effects of polluted runoff can make the water unhealthy for fish and for people.

It's up to all of us to keep our lakes, streams, and Long Island Sound clean. Polluted runoff can be reduced significantly if everyone incorporates small preventive measures into their regular everyday activities, such as properly disposing of pet waste or minimizing use of lawn fertilizers.



The Long Island Sound Study is a partnership of federal, state, and local government

agencies, private organizations, educational institutions, and other concerned organizations and individuals. Through a cooperative effort, these groups are working together to restore and protect Long Island Sound.

For more information about Long Island Sound or to order additional copies of this brochure, call the office at (203) 977-1541, or (631) 632-9216, or visit [www.longislandsoundstudy.net](http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net).



### What You Can Do

Wash your car on a grassy area so the ground can filter the water naturally.



Use soap sparingly and use non-phosphate detergents.

Use a high-pressure, low-volume hose that has a trigger nozzle to save water.

Empty your bucket of used, soapy water down the sink, not on the driveway or in the street.

Best of all, take your car to a commercial car wash. Most car washes reuse wash-water several times before sending it to a sewage treatment plant.

If you plan to hold a car wash fund-raising event, contact your public works department for suggested disposal methods of the soapy water.

### What You Can Do

Scoop up pet waste.



Flush the waste—as long as the droppings are not mixed with litter or other materials. This method is best because then your community sewage system treats the pet waste.

Seal the waste in a plastic bag and put it in the garbage, if local laws allow.

Bury the waste.

Never dump pet waste into a storm drain.

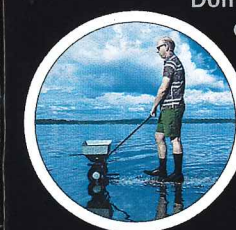
If your community does not regulate pet waste, encourage your local government to adopt a "Pooper-scooper" ordinance.

If your local parks do not provide pet waste stations, encourage them to do so.

### What You Can Do

Use fertilizers sparingly. Lawns and many plants do not need as much fertilizer as you might think.

Use organic, slow-release fertilizers.



Don't fertilize before a rain storm or a frost.

Use commercially available compost, or make your own using garden/yard waste. Mixing compost with your soil means your plants will need less chemical fertilizer and puts your waste to good use. Commercial

compost may be available from your local solid waste utility or a garden store.

Don't bag grass clippings. Use a mulching lawn mower and naturally fertilize your lawn with the grass clippings.

Wash your spreader and equipment on a pervious area like the lawn, not on the driveway. This allows natural absorption of excess fertilizer.

Maintain a buffer strip of unmowed natural vegetation bordering all water bodies to trap excess fertilizers and sediment.

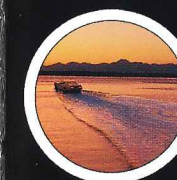
### What You Can Do

Check your car often for drips and oil leaks and fix them promptly.

Have your car tuned-up regularly to reduce oil use.

Use ground cloths or drip pans under your vehicle if you have leaks or are doing engine work.

Recycle used motor oil. Many auto supply stores, car-care centers, and gas stations will accept used oil. Many communities have hazardous-waste collection days and locations where used oil can be properly disposed.



Clean up spills immediately; you can use kitty litter or sand to soak up the liquid.

Collect all used oil in containers with tight-fitting lids. Old plastic jugs are excellent for this purpose.

Do not mix waste oil with gasoline, solvents, or other engine fluids. This contaminates the oil, which may be reused, and may form a more hazardous chemical.

Never dump motor oil, antifreeze, transmission fluid, or other engine fluids down storm drains, into road gutters, on the ground, or into a ditch.



The Long Island Sound Study thanks the Washington State Department of Ecology, King County and the cities of Bellevue, Seattle and Tacoma for letting us adapt these images and concepts for use in educating the Long Island Sound community about polluted runoff. This brochure was developed for the Long Island Sound Study by the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

