



# Down Stream Clean

## Helpful Hints to Keep Cañon City Water Clean

***What can you do to help?*** When water from snowmelt, rain or overflow runs off in Cañon City, it flows over impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, streets and parking lots. Pollutants such as debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants are picked up and carried to our river, streams, irrigation laterals and drinking water sources through storm sewers or overland flow. The pollution then ends up in water sources we use for swimming, fishing, and even the water we use to provide drinking water. It's important that we all work together to keep our runoff water clean. These hints provide easy answers to what you can do to help.



### *Your Great Outdoors*

- Excess lawn, plant, and insect chemicals can wash off and be carried to water sources, resulting in the pollution of that water. Use only the amount recommended for application on your property to avoid unabsorbed excesses.
- Avoid dumping or sweeping loose



- yard clippings and leaves into curbs and hard surfaces where moisture will cause polluted runoff. Bag, compost, or mulch yard waste.
- Keep piles of leaves, mulch, or dirt covered to avoid being blown or carried into storm sewers or streets.
- Use a broom and dustpan to clean driveways, sidewalks, and hard surface areas. Not only will it save water, but it will help avoid polluted water entering our water sources.

### *Designing Your Outdoor Spaces*

- Consider permeable pavement systems that allow rain and snowmelt to soak through for sidewalks, driveways, and hard surface landscaping.
- Collect rainwater from rooftops in mosquito-proof containers to be used later to water plants and lawns.
- Design areas in your landscape that provide natural places for rainwater to collect and soak into the



ground. Through careful planning, water from your rooftop or hard surfaces can be diverted to the planting areas. Not only good for water quality, but a water saver, too!

- Plant areas of native grass and/or plants along roadways, driveways, or water sources to trap the pollutants storm water picks up as it flows across hard surfaces.

### *Clean Up After Your Animals*

Pet and animal waste is a major source of bacteria. Clean up after your pet and dispose of all waste appropriately. Avoid washing animal waste into the storm sewers, streets and/or curbs to keep it from draining into water sources. Keep livestock away from stream banks and provide your animal's drinking water away from the river, irrigation laterals, etc.



### **Driving Clean**

Automobiles are expensive, and most people spend a great amount of time maintaining this large investment. Washing your car, inside and out,



can wash more than dirt into the water sources. Detergent, degreaser, automotive fluids, and even wax residue can pollute our river, irrigation, and water sources.

- Some commercial car washes treat or recycle wastewater. Find out if your local car wash has this environmentally friendly process.
- If you prefer to wash your car at home, wash it on your lawn to allow the water to infiltrate into the ground.



Many car owners do their own car repairs, as well as changing the oil and fluids. Take care to insure that none of these fluids are washed into the street or storm sewers.

- Doing so is as if you drained your car directly into the water source.
- If your car leaks, don't wash the oil or auto fluid down your driveway and into the street.
- Repair leaks, and take old auto fluids and batteries to appropriate disposal sites. Some auto care centers accept used oil and anti-freeze—check with your local stores.



For more information contact:

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Cañon City, CO 81212  
719-269-9011

### **Why Does Water Quality Matter?**

Polluted runoff can contaminate the Arkansas River and irrigation ditches, laterals and canals located throughout our community. This can wreak havoc on the wildlife we all enjoy in and around our community. Not enough reason? Think about this -

- The Arkansas River is the main supply source for the drinking water. Whether upstream from the City's intake, or downstream to other communities, polluted water resulting from runoff into the Arkansas River means more processing to insure that your drinking water is pure, safe, and crystal clean.



### **Cleaning Up In Business**

Many businesses have special conditions that create additional pollutants that threaten water quality. Commercial properties typically have more impervious surfaces, such as parking lots, sidewalks, etc. Dirt, oil, auto fluids, trash and litter, and accumulated dirt and debris can all be washed away into our water sources during and after rain storms and during snow melt.



As with other runoff, these pollutants eventually enter into our local water bodies. How can businesses help?

- Keep litter, dirt, and debris swept up from sidewalks, driveways and parking lots. As with your household maintenance, use a broom and dustpan to collect dirt and debris instead of using water to wash pollutants away.
- Pay special attention to storm sewer drains and keep the area around them clear of brush, debris, and other pollutants.