



Orange
County
Answers

FACTsheet

Provided as a Community Service of Orange County Public Works Department • 4200 S. John Young Parkway • Orlando, Florida 32839 • 407-836-5001

Ten Things You Can Do To Protect Stormwater

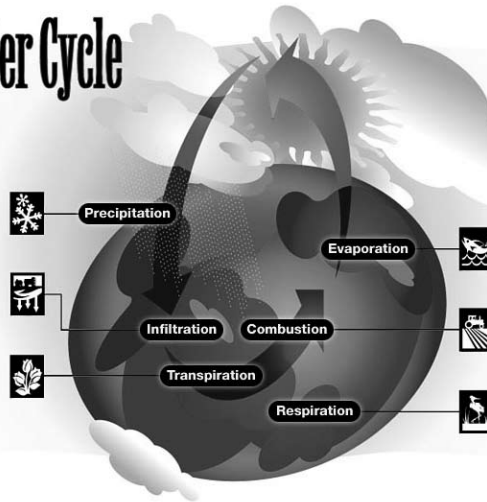
1 Do not throw cigarette butts or other litter on the ground: Cigarette filters absorb harmful compounds, such as cadmium, arsenic, and lead during the smoking process. A study conducted in 1998 showed that the chemicals from one used filter per two gallons of water presented a biohazard within just an hour of being exposed to water. Cigarette butts are deadly to birds, fish, and other wildlife that mistake them for food. The animals that eat filters also ingest and absorb the toxins.

2 Do not blow grass clippings into the street: Grass clippings should be blown onto the lawn as they are a natural organic fertilizer. If they wash down the storm drain they can clog the system and too many leaves and grass clippings in the lakes or ponds can take the oxygen out of the water and suffocate the plant and animal life that are needed to keep our lakes healthy.

3 Do not flush old drug prescriptions down the drain: Waste water treatment plants are unable to remove drugs from sewer system water and they end up in our rivers and streams.

4 Install rain barrels and rain gardens to collect runoff from your house roof: Slowing the stormwater down, keeping it off of hard surfaces, and allowing it to infiltrate through as much soil as possible will greatly improve the quality of our streams and our groundwater.

The Water Cycle



5 Reduce or eliminate the use of fertilizers and pesticides on your lawn: Any chemicals applied to the lawn or garden run off into waterways, kill beneficial insects, and are long lasting. Use non-toxic insect traps and biological controls available at garden centers.

6 Reduce the size of your lawn: Use xeroscape landscaping and native plants to reduce your grass

watering needs. St. Augustine grass uses excessive amounts of water and fertilizers. Replace it with landscaped areas that are drought tolerant.

7 Take your car to the car wash (they treat the wash water): or wash your car on the lawn where the water flows into the grass – don't let wash water get to the street and storm drain. Keep your car in good condition so it does not drip oils or other fluids.

8 Use Orange County's household Hazardous Waste recycling program: Properly dispose of paints, chemicals, and motor oils. Never dump them in the bushes or down the sink or toilet or into the street and storm drain.

9 Report pollution: If you see any unusual activities (*garbage dumping, brown or red tides, fish-kills, or other suspicious activities*) report it to the appropriate agencies.

10 Pass these tips along to others: Together, we can become the solution to stormwater pollution. 🐾