



Clean beaches and healthy creeks, rivers, bays and ocean are important to Orange County. However, if we are not careful, our daily activities can lead directly to water pollution problems. Water that drains through your watershed can pick up pollutants which are then transported to our waterways and beautiful ocean.

You can prevent water pollution by taking personal action and by working with members of your watershed community to prevent urban runoff from entering your waterway.

For more information, please call the **Orange County Stormwater Program** at **1.877.89.SPILL** or visit www.ocwatersheds.com

To report a spill, call the **Orange County 24-Hour Water Pollution Problem Reporting Hotline** at **1.877.89.SPILL**.

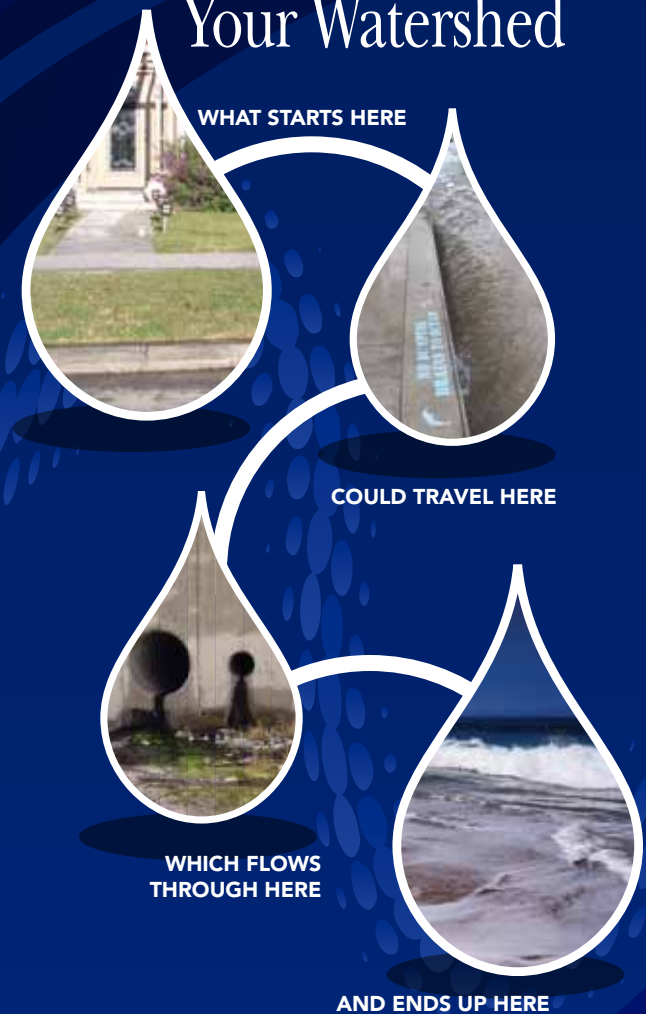
For emergencies, dial 911.

The tips contained in this brochure provide useful information to help protect your watershed. If you have other suggestions, please contact your city's stormwater representatives or call the Orange County Stormwater Program.



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Help Prevent Ocean Pollution: Tips For Protecting Your Watershed



The Ocean Begins
at Your Front Door



Tips for Protecting Your Watershed

My Watershed. Our Ocean.

Water + shed, noun: A region of land within which water flows down into a specified water body, such as a river, lake, sea, or ocean; a drainage basin or catchment basin.

Orange County is comprised of 11 major watersheds into which most of our water flows, connecting all of Orange County to the Pacific Ocean.



As water from rain (stormwater) or sprinklers and hoses (urban runoff) runs down your driveway and into your neighborhood streets, sidewalks

and gutters, it flows into storm drains that lead to waterways within your watershed. The waterways from other cities merge as they make their way through our watersheds until all the runoff water in Orange County meets at the Pacific Ocean. The water that reaches our ocean is not pure. As it flows through the watershed, it picks up pollutants such as litter, cigarette butts, fertilizer, pesticides, pet waste, motor oil and lawn clippings. Unlike water that enters the sewer (from sinks and toilets), water that enters the storm drain is not treated before it flows, ultimately, to the ocean.

Water quality can be improved by “Adopting Your Watershed.” Through this effort, we are challenging citizens and



organizations to join the Orange County Stormwater Program and others who are working to protect and restore our creeks, rivers, bays and ocean.

There are many opportunities to get involved:

- Appreciate your watershed - explore the creeks, trails and ocean and make observations about its conditions. If you see anything abnormal (such as dead fish, oil spills, leaking barrels, and other pollution) contact the Orange County 24-hour water pollution problem reporting hotline at 1.877.89.SPILL to report the problem.
- Research your watershed. Learn about what watershed you live in by visiting www.ocwatersheds.com.
- Find a watershed organization in your community and volunteer to help. If there are no active groups, consider starting your own.
- Visit EPA’s Adopt Your Watershed’s Catalog of Watershed Groups at www.epa.gov/adopt to locate groups in your community.
- Organize or join in a creek, river, bay or ocean cleanup event such as Coastal & Inner Coastal Cleanup Day that takes place the 3rd Saturday of every September. For more information visit www.coast4u.org.

Follow these simple tips to protect the water quality of your watershed:

- Sweep up debris and dispose of it in the trash. Do not hose down driveways or sidewalks into the street or gutter.
- Use dry cleanup methods such as cat litter to absorb spills and sweep up residue.
- Set your irrigation systems to reflect seasonal water needs or use weather-based controllers. Inspect for runoff regularly.
- Cover trashcans securely.
- Take hazardous waste to a household hazardous waste collection center. (For example, paint, batteries and petroleum products)
- Pick up after your pet.
- Follow application and disposal directions for pesticides and fertilizers.
- If you wash your car at home, wash it on your lawn or divert the runoff onto a landscaped area. Consider taking your car to a commercial car wash, where the water is reclaimed or recycled.
 - Keep your car well maintained.
 - Never pour oil or antifreeze in the street, gutter or storm drain.

