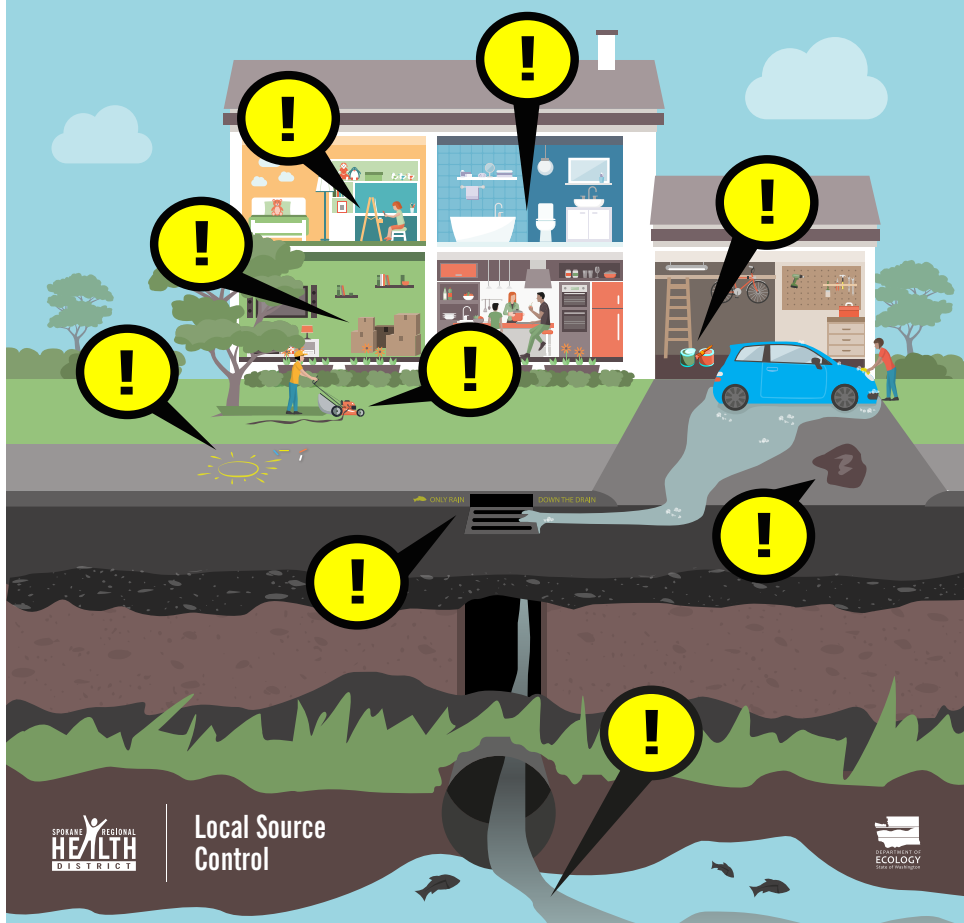


How Individuals Can Help

# Protect the Aquifer and Spokane River



## The Spokane River

It flows 112 miles from Lake Coeur d'Alene in Idaho to Lake Roosevelt in Washington. It flows past a half-million people – through cities, towns, farms and industrial areas.

## The Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer

This is the area's sole source of drinking water. Water flows from the aquifer into the river and from the river into the aquifer.

## How does pollution enter the aquifer and river?

Anything that is spilled or poured onto the ground can seep into the aquifer below us. Pollution enters the river through stormwater pipes and as runoff from farms, lawns and gardens. Pollutants found in the river include lead, arsenic, zinc, PCBs, flame retardants (PBDEs), dioxins, and furans. These pollutants can cause harm to humans and the environment.

## What can people do to help protect the river and aquifer?



### In general

- Buy and use products that are safe and environmentally friendly, such as phosphate-free soaps.
- Report materials being dumped into storm drains. Stormwater reporting hotline phone numbers are listed on the back of this handout.
- Use a garbage can for trash and recycle useable materials. Improperly discarded trash can be carried by runoff into storm drains.
- Never allow roof gutters to drain directly to the street or storm drains. Allow stormwater to flow onto the lawn instead.
- Never dump anything into storm drains, dry wells or drainage swales. This includes chemicals, pool water, car wash water and yard wastes.



### Auto maintenance

- Take cars to a commercial car wash where the waste water is either recycled or sent to the sewer for treatment. If you must wash a car at home, wash with biodegradable soap on a grassy area.
- Fix leaking cars. If oil or antifreeze leaked onto the ground, double-bag the polluted soil and dispose of it in the garbage can. Kitty litter can be used to soak up spilled oil and fluids.



## Household hazardous waste

- Dispose of household hazardous wastes properly. Paints, solvents, cleaners, fertilizers, fluorescent bulbs, batteries and pesticides can be disposed of for free at a regional solid waste disposal site.
- Choose water-based paints, such as latex, instead of oil-based paints.
- Never flush prescription or over-the-counter medications down toilets or drains. First remove any personal information from the label. Then make the medicine unusable - dissolve pills, mix liquids with kitty litter or dirt. Lastly, seal the container and hide it in the trash. Or, take it to a solid waste disposal site.



## Used oil and antifreeze

Recycle at a regional solid waste site. Used oil may also be recycled at approved waste oil drop sites, such as automotive shops.



## Lawn and garden

- Fertilizers & pesticides: follow the directions – do not over-apply.
- Avoid spilling or applying fertilizers to driveways and sidewalks.
- Use slow-release, environmentally friendly fertilizers.
- Pull weeds by hand when possible, and plant disease-resistant plant species.
- Consider using natural pest control such as lady-bugs. Water lawns and gardens only as much as necessary. Over-watering can allow fertilizers to reach ground water or flow into storm drains and surface water.
- Mow the lawn 2-3 inches high and leave the clippings on the grass. Less water will be needed to maintain the lawn and fewer weeds will grow.
- Control soil erosion on property by planting ground cover and stabilizing erosion-prone areas.
- Scoop pet waste and put it in garbage. Cover and control animal manure on small farms.



***Everyone has a responsibility  
to protect Spokane's water.***

# Questions?



## Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD)

509.324.1560, ext. 3

509.324.1464 TDD

[srhd.org](http://srhd.org)

All SRHD materials are available in an alternate format, upon request, by contacting the Communications team at 509.324.1681.

## Resources

### City of Spokane Wastewater Management

509.625.7900

509.625.7999 *Stormwater Hotline*

[spokanewastewater.org](http://spokanewastewater.org)

### City of Spokane Valley Stormwater Utility

509.477.3600

509.477.7525 *Stormwater Hotline*

[spokanevalley.org](http://spokanevalley.org)

### Spokane County Stormwater Utility

509.477.3604 *Stormwater Hotline*

[spokanecounty.org/stormwater](http://spokanecounty.org/stormwater)

### Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District

509.922.5443

[libertylake.org](http://libertylake.org)

### E-cycle Washington

1-800-RECYCLE

[ecyclewashington.org](http://ecyclewashington.org)

### Light Recycle WA

[lightrecycle.org](http://lightrecycle.org)

### The River Forum

[spokaneriver.net](http://spokaneriver.net)

### Spokane Aquifer Joint Board

[spokaneaquifer.org](http://spokaneaquifer.org)

### Washington State Department of Ecology

509.329.3400

[ecology.wa.gov](http://ecology.wa.gov)

### Spokane Regional Solid Waste System

#### Household Hazardous Waste and Recycling

509.477.6800

[spokanecountysolidwaste.org](http://spokanecountysolidwaste.org)

#### Valley Transfer Station

3941 N. Sullivan Rd.

#### Waste to Energy Facility

2900 S. Geiger Blvd.

#### North Transfer Station

22123 Elk-Chattaroy Rd.

### Spokane-Kootenai Waste Directory

[spokanewastedirectory.org](http://spokanewastedirectory.org)

### Spokane County - WSU Agricultural Master Gardener Cooperative Extension

Get information on low water and native plants

509.477.2181

[extension.wsu.edu/spokane/](http://extension.wsu.edu/spokane/)

[master-gardener-program/](http://extension.wsu.edu/spokane/master-gardener-program/)

[mastergardener@spokanecounty.org](mailto:mastergardener@spokanecounty.org)