

# Stormwater Pollution

*Stormwater pollution is the main water quality issue in the nation.*

Stormwater runoff is water from rain that “runs off” across the land instead of seeping into the ground.

As runoff travels to our local waterways, it picks up pollutants discarded from homes, businesses, farms, streets, etc.

Pollution can come from a variety of natural and manmade sources including:

- agricultural waste
- automotive fluids
- fertilizers and pesticides
- lawn/yard clippings
- chemicals
- pet waste



This untreated runoff flows into the nearest waterway impairing water quality and damaging wildlife habitats.

## *Working Together to Save the Source*

You can help reduce stormwater pollution by remembering to:

- Conserve and reuse water
- Sweep yard debris from driveways and sidewalks rather than hosing down the area
- Compost and/or recycle yard waste such as grass clippings, tree trimmings, etc.
- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly  
\*Remember to follow Lee County's Landscape and Fertilizer Best Management Practices Ordinance No. 08-08
- Landscape your yard with native plants
- Dispose of household and hazardous waste such as used auto fluids, paint, batteries, oil, etc. at Lee County's permanent Household and Chemical Waste Facility (off Metro Parkway at 6441 Topaz Court in Ft. Myers)



**nurture nature**  
- Save the Source!



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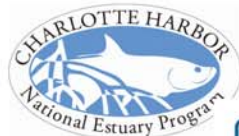
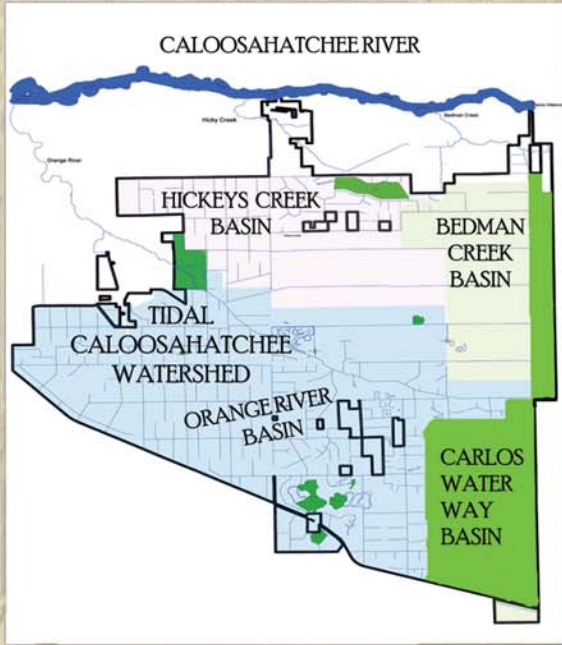


Photo Credit: University of Florida IFAS, and Stan Shebs

*How you can help reduce  
stormwater pollution ...*

# What is a Watershed?

A watershed is like a funnel - it collects all of the stormwater from one area and drains to a common point such as a canal, wetland, river, etc.



Stormwater recharges ground water supplies in natural areas during the wet season.

In a suburban watershed area, much of the land surface is covered by buildings and pavement. The changes to the natural area creates stormwater runoff and changes the natural flow of stormwater. This process can prevent rain from soaking into the ground.

It can also lead to an excess of stormwater in the wet season and a shortage of ground water in the dry season.

Stormwater drains or catch basins are designed to carry stormwater away from developed areas to prevent flooding.

## Let's get to the Root of Stormwater Pollution!

### Did You Know...?

The plants used to landscape your yard could be affecting water quality and water conservation efforts.



### Native Plants

Florida's native plants are naturally adapted to this region and have evolved to handle an environment of hot, wet summers and cool, dry winters.

Native plants are considered drought-tolerant and do not require the use of pesticides and/or herbicides.

Many are beautiful and suited for home landscapes since they require less irrigation and fertilizer than non-native plants.

They also provide both food and shelter for native wildlife.

### Non-Native Plants



Non-native plants were brought to Florida from somewhere else.

Some are weedy, invasive plants which can cause widespread ecological damage to both native plant and animal communities.

Invasive, non-native plants grow quickly; have no natural enemies; produce abundant seeds; flourish in a wide range of soil conditions; and can prevent native species from growing.