



## CAMERON COUNTY

# STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

### PREVENTING WATER POLLUTION.....IT STARTS WITH YOU

#### 10 Easy Tips For Protecting Our (Resacas, Arroyos, Streams, Rivers, Bays and Estuaries)

As storm water flows over driveways, lawns, and sidewalks. It picks up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants. Storm water can flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland, or coastal water. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the water bodies we use for swimming, fishing, and providing drinking water. Polluted runoff is the nation's greatest threat to clean water.

**1. Use a commercial car wash or wash your car on a lawn or other unpaved surface.**

This will help to minimize the amount of dirty, soapy water flowing into the storm drain and eventually into our local waterbodies.

**2. Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly.**

When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts. Avoid application if the forecast calls for rain; otherwise, chemicals will be washed into your local stream.

**3. Pick up after your pet.**

When walking your pet, remember to pick up the waste and dispose of it properly. Flushing pet waste is the best disposal method. Leaving pet waste on the ground increases public health risks by allowing harmful bacteria and nutrients to wash into the storm drain and eventually into local waterbodies.

**4. Dispose of household cleaners, paint and other chemicals safely.**

Many cleaning products found in our homes and garages are too dangerous to be disposed of in the trash or down the drain. Read the label: anything marked, Poison or Danger should be taken to your local hazardous waste center. Use water-based paints and dry off excess paint with a paper towel before rinsing your paintbrush.

**5. Sweep off - instead of hosing - the driveway, patio or sidewalk.**

Hosing for 15 minutes wastes 150 gallons of water. Water run-off from our driveways or sidewalks carries contaminants, such as dirt, motor oil, fertilizers and animal waste, into our rivers.

**6. Decrease polluted runoff from paved surfaces.**

Reduce the amount of paved area and increase the amount of vegetated area in your yard. Use native plants in your landscaping to reduce the need for watering during dry periods. Direct you gutter downspouts away from paved surfaces onto lawns and other measures to increase infiltration and reduce polluted runoff.

**7. Fix car leaks promptly.**

Leaky cars leave drips or puddles of motor oil and other fluids on our streets and driveways. When it rains, these contaminants run down our streets, through the storm drains, and into our rivers. So clean stains on your driveway or street and fix car leaks right away. Preventing polluted run-off will help keep our rivers and drinking water safe.

**8. Take care when changing your car's motor oil and dispose of the oil safely.**

One quart of motor oil can pollute 250,000 gallons of river water, so use a large pan if you are changing motor oil yourself. Never pour leftover oil down a storm drain or into the trash dumpster instead, drop it off at your local hazardous waste center.

**9. Water your lawn and garden only in the morning or evening.** Water evaporates quickly during the middle of the day. Remember, a lawn only needs 1 to 1.5 inches of water per week, and you can set out a can to measure for you. Watering less creates deeper, stronger roots and a healthier lawn. Or you could try letting the lawn go brown, as nature intended during summer months. Another option is to plant native plants or landscaping that require less water altogether. Don't allow water to run off your lawn into the storm drain.

**10. Buy and use environmentally friendly products.**

Choose safer, multi-purpose cleaners marked with only a "Caution" warning rather than products with "Poison and Danger" on the label. Avoid chlorine, phosphate products and solvents like paint thinner.

For more information contact: **CAMERON COUNTY'S STORM WATER TEAM**

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To report storm water polluters call: **CAMERON COUNTY STORM WATER HOTLINE**

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