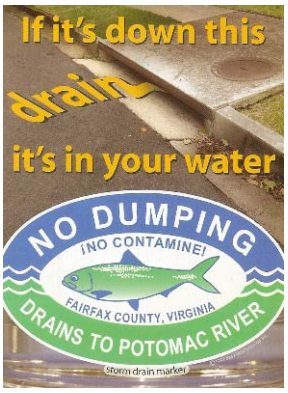
GROVETON, VIRGINIA CIVIC ASSOCIATION (GCA)

STORM DRAIN LABELING EDUCATION PROJECT



ONLY RAIN IN THE DRAIN!!!

Volunteers from GCA, Groveton Elementary and West Potomac High Schools have been labeling the storm drains in our neighborhood.

This project has been approved by the GCA and is sponsored by the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District and Virginia Department of Transportation. Funding is provided by Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Service.

STORM DRAIN FACTS

WHAT IS A STORM DRAIN?

Storm drain inlets are located at low spots along the roads to prevent flooding by carrying rain and melting ice or snow away from our streets. This storm drainage system empties the water and all wastes collected by the water directly into our watersheds. **The storm water is not filtered at a treatment plant!**

WHAT IS A WATERSHED?

It's an area of land that drains into a body of water. In the GCA community, the water runoff drains into the following watersheds: ***Cameron Run, Dogue Creek, and Little Hunting Creek.*** From these watersheds, the runoff flows into the Potomac River, then to the Chesapeake Bay, and out to the Atlantic Ocean.

WHY LABEL STORM DRAINS?

Labeling is a low-cost method of raising awareness about water quality problems in our rivers and the Bay. They remind us to keep our storm drains clear of trash and to dispose of hazardous wastes properly.

NON-POINT VS POINT SOURCE POLLUTION

Pollution that enters our water resources through the neighborhood storm drains is called **non-point source pollution (NPS)**. It doesn't come from one point, like a sewage treatment plant or from an industrial discharge pipe.

WHERE DOES NPS COME FROM?

Non-point source pollution comes from all of us. A little pollution may come from many smaller sources, like each of our streets and yards. This makes it harder to control.

Non-point source pollution is the leading cause of water quality deterioration in the Chesapeake Bay.

Point source pollution is pollution that can be traced to a specific source such as industrial waste. These sources of pollution often are easier to identify and control than non-point source discharges.

SOURCES AND IMPACT OF WATER POLLUTION

DON'T LET POLLUTANTS FROM THESE SOURCES GO DOWN THE STORM DRAIN:

• **Sediments**: Road dirt and sand in gutters and soil erosion. By volume, this is the largest source of NPS pollution. Sediment blocks sunlight to underwater vegetation by clouding water. It also clogs breathing gills of mollusks and insects and can cover fish spawning beds, leaving them unable to reproduce.

• **Nutrients:** Fertilizer and yard debris (mainly nitrogen and phosphorus). Nutrients over-enrich waterways causing an explosion in plant or algae growth. This depletes oxygen needed for aquatic life and harms the ecosystem.

• **Toxics:** Paint, pesticides, motor oil, anti-freeze, cleaning products, and other hazardous wastes. Toxins accumulate in fish and shellfish and either kill them or make them susceptible to disease. Infected fish/shellfish can have a direct impact on humans who eat them.

• **Pathogens:** Disease-causing organisms found in pet waste and other bacteria. This contaminates shellfish and makes our rivers an unsafe place to swim or use for water sports.

• **Litter:** Cigarette butts, Styrofoam®, plastic, cans, etc. Litter can take hundreds of years to degrade. Marine animals can mistake plastic for food or become entangled in it.

YOUR ROLE IN REDUCING WATERWAY CONTAMINATION

WE ALL PLAY A PART…. Look at the litter lying in the curbs. Where do all those cigarette butts, candy wrappers, chip bags and soda cans come from? The source of all that litter is people-- not one person or place, but many different people and places.

1. Put all litter and pet waste in garbage cans. If you see trash in the street, pick it up so it doesn't get washed or blown down the drain.

2. Dispose of paint, motor oil, and other hazardous wastes properly. Take used motor oil and antifreeze to a gas station or recycling center. Take other harmful chemicals to the Household Hazardous Waste Center at the I-95 Landfill in Lorton or the I-66 Transfer Station in Fairfax.

3. Practice bay-friendly lawn care (www.cbf.org/landscaping). Use fertilizers sparingly. Never apply fertilizer before a rain.

4. Sweep, do not hose down driveways or sidewalks. Sweep up dirt, leaves, or grass clippings from your driveway or along the street curb.

MAKE SURE NOTHING GOES DOWN THE STORM DRAINS EXCEPT WATER!!

5. Wash your car on grass or take it to a car wash, rather than washing it on the street where soap, oil, and gasoline could flow into a storm drain. Use a hose nozzle to prevent water from running when not in use.

6. Seed, install sod or plant ground cover on bare areas to prevent soil erosion. Direct your water runoff to a grassy area.

7. Use permeable paving materials that allow rain to penetrate the surface rather than running off directly into the storm drain.

8. Compost yard and garden debris. Leave grass clippings on the lawn to reduce up to 70% of fertilizer requirements.

9. If you see someone dumping hazardous substances into the storm drains, contact the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue at 703-691-2131.

For more information on the Storm Drain Labeling Project, contact the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District at 703-324-1423, www. fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd.

This project is being organized by GCA - GCA22306@verizon.net. www.GrovetonVa.org