

**watershed**

\wä-t&r-shed\ noun

: an area of land form which water drains to a common point, such as a stream, river, wetland, or lake; the area drained by a river or river system, including streams, rivers, wetlands, and lakes

**riparian**

\rI-per-E-&n\ adjective

: relating to or living on the bank of a natural watercourse or sometimes of a lake or tidewater

**THE RIVER BEGINS WITH EACH OF US**

Clean water forms a vital component of the Northwest.

Thousands of streams and rivers meander through our cities and our countryside.

We value these waterways for many reasons, among them recreation, drinking water, wildlife and beauty; our rivers and streams are worth protecting, yet pollution threatens them all.

Because all water in a watershed is connected our actions can have a profound effect on nearby water quality. The pollutants we put on the ground and even in the air – chemicals, fertilizers, gasoline, paint, grease, dirt – can end up in our streams.

Nobody enjoys seeing the sheen of oil and toxins on top of the water like a shimmering skin. But together we can prevent this.

As riparian property owners, your proximity to the water means you have even greater influence on the vitality of our watercourses.

It only takes simple changes in behavior with regard to how we care for the land to solve water pollution problems.

Land, water, wildlife, animals and people all joined together, just as they will always be with your assistance.

This pamphlet offers helpful tips and ideas for riparian property owners to protect our watersheds so we can enjoy them for generations to come.

**We All Need to Help Take Care of Our Streams**

**HELPFUL TIPS TO SAFEGUARD LOCAL WATER RESOURCES**

**LANDSCAPING TIPS:**

1. Plant native trees and shrubs along stream banks. They filter pollutants and excess nutrients from the water, cool the streams, keep the banks stable, and provide habitat for fish and wildlife.
2. Choose plants best suited to the conditions and climate. Native plants require less water and care.
3. “Natural organic” and “slow-release” fertilizers last longer, don’t wash away as easily and enhance the soil. Still, avoid applying these fertilizers or any other chemicals near streams. The high concentration of nutrients in fertilizers pollutes the water and harms wildlife.
4. Use pest and disease-resistant varieties of plants to reduce the need for chemicals. If you must use chemicals, make your own less-toxic pesticides and fertilizers, or read labels to find less-toxic products. Trim and thin out plants and trees to prevent insects and disease from building up.

**FARM CARE TIPS:**

1. Avoid over-irrigation. This wastes water and causes topsoil, fertilizer and pesticides to run into streams.
2. To protect water quality and reduce erosion, place fences around water areas to keep livestock away.
3. If manure is concentrated in one area, ensure that it doesn’t mix with rainwater or enter the streams.

**YARD CARE TIPS:**

1. Use push mowers rather than gas-powered mowers. They’re much better for the environment (gas-powered mowers can pollute more than cars!), they provide good exercise and are less expensive to own and operate. Consider native wildflower mixes or forest groundcover for “no mow” landscaping.
2. A healthy lawn requires only one inch of water per week. This amount is optimal to encourage deeper grass roots, less weeds, and a reduced runoff of nutrients. The best time to water is early morning, to limit evaporation and prevent fungal growth, which usually occurs in late afternoon or evening.
3. Direct runoff and drainage water away from septic tanks, storm drains, and impervious surfaces and onto grass and gravel. This allows the water to naturally filter through the ground.
4. Keep pesticides, motor oil, and other toxic substances away from wells and streams. Contact Metro for the best method of disposal of these chemicals in your area.
5. Pet waste can contaminate the water. Clean it up to prevent it from washing into streams.
6. To manage harmful bugs while protecting beneficial ones, use traps, barriers, and “least toxic” sprays.
7. Use mechanical rather than chemical methods to remove invasive weeds and plants. Pull weeds as soon as they appear to prevent them from spreading. Whenever possible replant with native species.

**STREAMSIDE TIPS:**

1. Limit structures such as docks and bulkheads as they increase erosion and decrease viable habitat.
2. Protect shoreline habitat by maintaining a buffer of native trees, shrubs and groundcover near the streams instead of lawn all the way. These plants hold soil, attract useful insects and provide shelter and shade for wildlife such as salmon. Wider buffers are better, especially when the slopes are steep.
3. Leave boulders and branches in the stream. Logs and rocks form the pools and riffles that provide food and habitat for fish and other wildlife.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**

METRO (503) 797-1700

Backyard Composting by John W. Roulac, Harmonious Press, 1995; (800) 247-6553.

Baker’s Dozen, Amazing Tips, Tricks and Tonics by Jerry Baker, the YardenCare Company, 1994

Ten ‘Most Wanted’ Pests, Green Gardening Program, (206) 547-7561

Homeowner’s Guide to the Ecolawn, City of Salem Public Works, (503) 588-6211

Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides (541) 344-5044

Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District (503) 656-3499

Oregon State & Clackamas County’s Heritage Tree Programs (800) 574-9397

Oregon State University Extension Office (OSU) (503) 655-8631

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) (800) 720-6339.

ODFW Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program (503) 657-2000

This brochure was developed in response to the recommendations of several citizen advisory groups. They suggested that informing riparian property owners of easy ways to safeguard water quality is an effective means of preserving our watersheds for wildlife and future generations.

Please feel free to contact Oak Lodge Sanitary District at (503) 653-1653 for any further information regarding any of the tips mentioned in this brochure. Two additional brochures, *Stream-Friendly Home and Yard Care* and *Stream and Wetland Enhancement Guide*, offer fertilizer, pesticide and composting recipes as well as native plant and eco-lawn suggestions.

## CAR WASHING TIPS:

1. Use automatic car washes that reuse water and properly remove detergents.
2. Park your vehicle on grass if you must wash it at home. This allows the pollutants to filter through the soil.

## PRESSURE WASHING TIPS:

1. To keep pollutants out of waterways, sweep sidewalks and driveways before you pressure wash and put this litter in the garbage. Design ways to keep paint flakes, grease, and other contaminants from washing into storm drains and waterways. Outdoor paint is particularly important to collect, as it may contain poisonous lead.
2. Often, water pressure alone can remove grime and dirt. If you must use a chemical cleaner, try mixing 8 parts mild laundry detergent with 2 parts vinegar and 1 part lemon juice for a less-toxic variety.
3. Direct the pressure wash spray onto grassy and other non-impervious areas.

## ROOF TREATMENT TIPS:

1. Using non-organic roofing materials will help protect the roof from moss.
2. Leaves and debris hold moisture, which promotes fungal growth and damage. Prevent these materials from building up on your roof.
3. To kill roof moss and lichen use less-toxic, environmentally friendly alternatives that don't contain copper, zinc or iron sulfate metals, and use the minimum concentration recommended on label.
4. Disconnect downspouts from gutter when applying liquid treatments, allowing the runoff to filter through the soil instead of flowing to the nearest stream. Wait at least three rainfalls to reconnect downspouts.
5. To allow treatment to soak into roof apply it only during dry weather.

## COMPOSTING TIPS:

1. Compost yard clippings and food scraps into organic fertilizer, which prevents it from washing into streams and wetlands where it clogs drainage, causes flooding, and reduces the water's dissolved oxygen.
2. For an easy way to build and maintain a compost pile, use composting receptacles or "machines". They control odors and speed up decomposition. Metro has a list of vendors.
3. To best hold materials in place keep your compost pile on level ground .
4. Build your compost pile away from waterways. This prevents the excess nutrients and bacteria from seeping into the water.
5. Eggshells, coffee grinds and filters, and paper help to enrich your compost.
6. Avoid placing meat scraps and bones into the compost. They produce strong odors that attract scavengers.



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QUICK AND EASY WAYS IN WHICH  
YOU CAN HELP TO PROTECT OUR  
VALUABLE WATER RESOURCES

# A WATERSHED MOMENT

IT ONLY TAKES A MOMENT  
TO START SAVING OUR FUTURE

QUICK AND EASY WAYS YOU  
CAN HELP TO PROTECT OUR  
VALUABLE WATER RESOURCES

RIPARIAN PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION GUIDE