

Let's keep leaves out of our gutters and storm drain.

Although leaves seem “natural” and harmless, excess leaves pose a threat to our rivers, streams and lake water quality. Leaves in the curb and gutters are washed down storm drains and ditches and into nearby rivers and streams when it rains. Once they get into the water and begin to decay, leaves release nutrients contributing to excess algae in the lakes, making water recreation a less than pleasant experience. Even if the leaves themselves don't move, rain seeping through leaf piles and leaves crushed by car tires make a rich “nutrient tee” that flows along the curb into the storm drains.

American Fork City water quality's continuing public education efforts urges residents to keep leaves out of the curb and gutters and offers alternatives to raking them to the curb by:

1. Composting leaves for a nutrient-rich fertilizer for our gardens or till them directly into your garden.
2. Chopping the leaves with your lawnmower into small particles that will decompose directly into your lawn.
3. Raking leaves and collecting them at the edge of the street—but not in the curb and gutter or ditches. Make sure to sweep or rake leaves so they don't get washed down the storm drain. Wet the leaves down or cover the leaves with a tarp or bag to prevent them from blowing into the gutters.

Storm Water



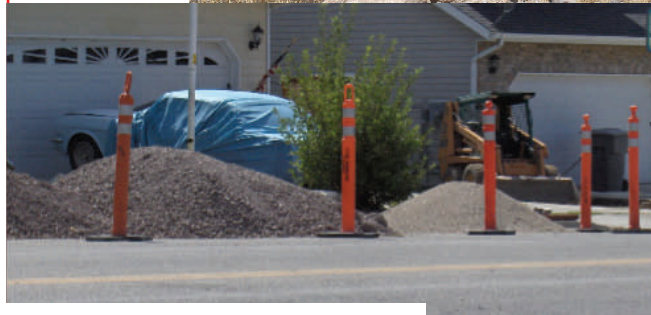
Do

Sweep to remove excess material and not wash it down the drain.



Don't

Dump material or debris on sidewalk, curb and gutter or roadway



**American Fork City
Storm Water**

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**Protecting our
water resources**



What is Storm Water

What is Storm Water?

Storm water is water from rain, snow, sleet, or hail that flows across the ground and pavement or when snow and ice melt. The water seeps into the ground or drains into what we call the storm drain system. These are the drains you see at street corners, catch basins, detention/retention basins, irrigation canals, creeks and the American Fork River. Collectively, the draining water is called storm water runoff and is a concern in all areas of American Fork including residential, commercial, industrial and roadway areas of unincorporated portions of our City.

Why is this program necessary?

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), 40 percent of our nation's waterways remain polluted and storm water runoff is a leading source.

Storm water pollution can occur when it rains, or as oil, salt, litter, soil, fertilizer and pesticides are washed into nearby street drains. Most of these drains empty directly into the streams and rivers that we use for fishing, swimming and boating, and result in unusable and polluted waterways.



When it rains, it drains



Everyday Pollutants

Floatables: Floatables are pieces of litter in the water. They may be contaminated with toxic chemicals and bacteria. Floatables are also an eyesore in our waterways. Commonly observed floatables include cigarettes, plastic containers, wrappers and cans. Floatables such as these are generally the result of careless handling practices or littering.

Sediment: Sediment can be harmful to aquatic life (plants, fish and other animals that live in lakes and streams). Sediments can carry chemicals that are toxic and that cause the oxygen in water to be used up. Sediment covers the bottoms of streams, harming the habitat needed by aquatic insects and plants. Sediment generally is the result of soil erosion from lawns, hill-sides, gardening/landscaping activities. Large amounts of sediment can reduce the capacity of streams to carry storm runoff, thus necessitating expending tax dollars for maintenance of the system.

Oil & Grease: Petroleum products (gasoline, oil and grease) may be toxic to aquatic life, even in small amounts. Oil and grease in storm drains can generally be traced to automotive leaks and spills or improper disposal of used oil and automotive products into storm drains.

Pesticides, Herbicides and Fertilizers: Excess amounts of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers applied to yards, lawns and greenways are washed into streams during rainfall events. These chemicals can cause increased algae growth and toxicity to organisms.

Metals: Metals such as lead, zinc, mercury, copper and cadmium in water can be toxic to humans, aquatic life and other animals that drink the water. Metals come from vehicle exhaust, weathered paint, metal plating, tires and motor oil.

Toxic Substances: Gasoline, household products, and paint thinner are examples of toxic substances. These substances can deplete oxygen in waterways and cause toxic effects in living organisms. Potential pollutants that may be present in residential areas, business and construction sites are listed below.

Residential: Pet waste, vehicle fluids (oil, gas, antifreeze), paint, pesticides, solvents, batteries, hazardous wastes, grass clippings, tree trimmings, leaves, street litter, soap from car washing.

Businesses: Fuel, soap from equipment washing, waste process water, hazardous liquids.

Construction: Sediment, wash water from concrete mixers, used oils and solvents, landscaping materials (trees, shrubs, soil additives), vehicle fluids (oil, gas and antifreeze).

Best Management Practices

Best Management Practices, or BMP's, are things that can be done to minimize the amount of pollutants that enter storm water and reach the American Fork River and Utah Lake. BMP's include, among others, activities that individuals can do.

Do Your Part

- Clean up after your pet
- Clean up spills immediately

Fertilize only your yard, not your driveway or sidewalk

Wash your car on the lawn or at a commercial car wash

Sweep your driveway and sidewalk, don't hose them down

Dispose of old paint, pesticides, solvents and batteries appropriately

Compost yard waste such as grass clippings, tree trimmings and leaves