



Your Local Watershed and You:

What can you do to help protect your watershed?

Do you know what a watershed is? Did you know you are in a watershed right now?

Think of a giant glass bowl. Now picture a drop of water hitting the rim of the bowl, sliding down the side, and finally resting on the bottom of the bowl. Each drop of water that hits the rim will follow the same routine – down the side to the bottom. The bottom of the bowl eventually fills with those water drops. This is a small scale demonstration of a watershed. A watershed is an area of land that

drains into the same body of water, whether it's a stream, river, lake, or ocean. All of the land that drains into the Grand

River, also referred to as the Grand River Basin, represents a subwatershed of the Lake Michigan Basin. To find out which subwatershed you live in, enter your address in the **Lower Grand River Watershed Map** at LGROW.org.



Why Should You Care?

When it rains, the water that isn't soaked back into the ground is called stormwater. Stormwater runs off of impervious surfaces, like concrete driveways and asphalt-paved streets, then eventually into the Grand River. Unfortunately, stormwater can carry a lot of harmful waste on its way to our lakes and streams – gas and oil from parking lots, excess fertilizer from your lawn, pet waste, and various other pollutants. These pollutants can end up in the lakes, rivers, and streams in which we fish, play, and swim.



What Can You Do?

You can help reduce the pollutants entering our waterways and their negative impact on our environment in many ways, from picking up after your pet to installing a rain barrel on your property. For a full list of activities to prevent stormwater pollution in the Lower Grand River Watershed, visit the Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds' **Information and Education Page** at LGROW.org.

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How You Can Help Reduce Pollution Entering The Grand River.

Stormwater is rain water that isn't soaked into the ground during a rain event. As stormwater passes over impervious surfaces like streets and parking lots, it picks up pollutants such as oil and grease from parking lots and roadways, excess fertilizer from lawns, and pet waste. Locally, this stormwater is not treated; rather it is discharged to the Grand River and its tributaries via storm sewer systems and drainage ditches. Find out where stormwater from your property goes by using the **Lower Grand River Watershed Map** at **LGRW.org**.

Here are a few ways YOU can reduce stormwater pollution from entering the storm sewer system in your community:

- Reduce stormwater by planting rain gardens and using rain barrels in your gardens to prevent water from leaving your property.
- Keep storm drains near your home clear of litter by disposing of trash and recyclables in proper containers.
- Collect yard waste to prevent grass clippings and leaves from clogging the storm sewer system.
- Avoid fertilizing your lawn before a rain storm, use only the manufacturer's recommendations, and sweep up excess fertilizer on hard surfaces like sidewalks, driveways, and roadways.
- Ensure that soiled water and other wastes from car washing practices do not enter the storm sewer system by washing your car on grass or gravel, rather than your driveway. Better yet, take your vehicles to a commercial car wash that sends wash water through the sanitary sewer.
- Be Septic Smart! Keep your septic system maintained to protect your family's drinking water and reduce the risk of contaminating local water.
- Properly dispose of any pet waste in a closed trash receptacle. Pet waste is raw sewage and contains harmful bacteria, easily transported to water through stormwater.
- Be conscious in closing lids on dumpsters and outdoor trash cans.



For more ways to protect the Lower Grand River Watershed, visit the Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds' Information and Education Page at LGRW.org.

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