



## Ways you can help your watershed.

### 1. Learn your watershed address.

Being aware of your watershed helps you understand where and by whom decisions affecting your water quality are made. Tell others about watersheds. Take notice of new signs being installed at highway river crossings in Virginia to help people recognize what watershed they are in.

### 2. Adopt-A-Stream.

Go on a stream walk to assess where problems might occur. Organize a clean up or learn to monitor your stream for changes that might affect the water quality.



### 3. Landscape your home with conservation in mind.

Use native plants that require less maintenance and help hold soil in place. Cover bare spots in your yard to prevent erosion. Use permeable paving surfaces such as wood decks, bricks and concrete lattice to let water soak into the ground.

4. Did you know that most grasses should be fertilized in the fall, not spring? Using the correct amount at the right time can save you money and keep harmful nutrients out of local streams.



### 5. Be a pooper-scooper.



Stormwater carries litter, pet waste and other pollutants directly into waterways. Animal waste may contain harmful bacteria, viruses and nutrients that can pollute waterways.

### 6. Do not dispose of oil or other waste into storm drains.

One gallon of used oil can pollute two million gallons of water. Take the oil to a recycling center or gas station to be recycled.

### 7. If you have a septic system, properly maintain it.




Faulty septic systems can pollute local groundwater. Septic tanks should be pumped out every three to five years.

8. Get involved. All of us have a role in improving water quality. Encourage local government officials to plan with the watershed in mind. Get involved in a local watershed organization near you. Get trained to be a volunteer water quality monitor.



### 9. Buy a Chesapeake Bay license plate.

More than half the state's lands drain into the bay. Money from the license plate sales supports the work of local groups to restore and protect the watershed.



DCR is your watershed connection across Virginia. Our Chesapeake Bay Watershed Office has five locations and our Southern Rivers Watersheds Office has four to serve you locally. For more information, other tips on how you can help and a list of local DCR watershed office contacts, visit DCR's website at <http://www.dcr.state.va.us> or call 1-877-42WATER.



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## Watershed Connections



### Do you know your watershed address?

Rivers don't know county boundaries or state borders.

It's watersheds that connect us to our waters . . . and you can make a difference.







**Everything we do on the land affects the quality of the water in our rivers and streams.**

We need water to drink, to keep clean, for recreation, transportation, fishing, and to produce goods and energy. But most people don't spend much time thinking about where their water comes from or how their actions on land can affect water. Everything we do on the land affects the quality of the water in our rivers and streams. When water runs off the land, it takes fertilizers, loose soil, litter and other pollutants with it.



Trying to prevent pollution from running off land that drains into a waterway is what watershed management is all about.

**We all live in a watershed.**  
**You know your street address, but do you know your watershed address?**

Think about where the water goes when it runs off your roof. Water runs off your roof or driveway into a nearby creek or stream, and then flows to a larger river, bay or lake. All the land that drains to a particular water body is its *watershed*.

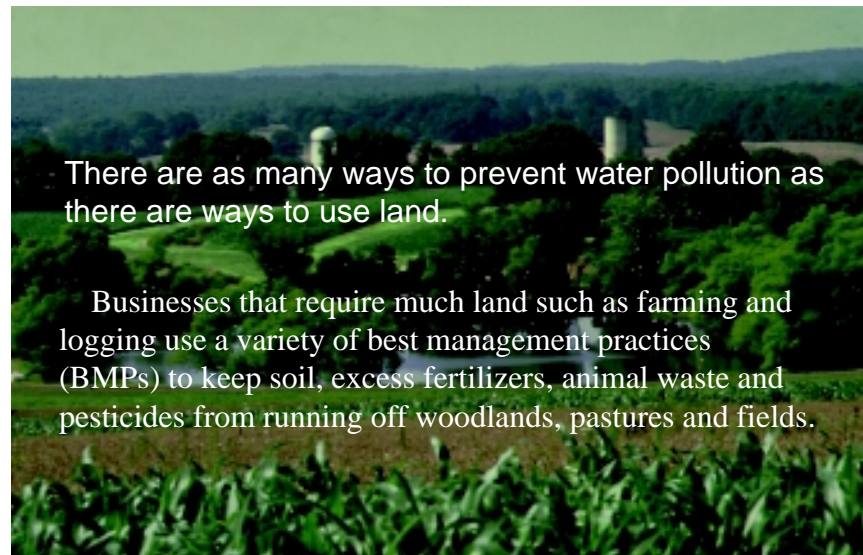
### Virginia's watersheds

A river's watershed is made up of the smaller watersheds for each creek or stream that flows into the river. Virginia has 497 subwatersheds, that make up the state's 14 major watersheds. More than half of the state's lands drain to the Chesapeake Bay. The waters from the southern rivers all leave the state. Some flow to the Albemarle Sound in North Carolina. It surprises some people to learn that many of Virginia's watersheds eventually drain to the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico!



### Why should you care what watershed you live in?

If you're concerned about the quality of the water you use, you might be interested in knowing where it's been before it gets to you. The way land is used upstream has a direct effect on your water. Most of us live downstream from someone else.

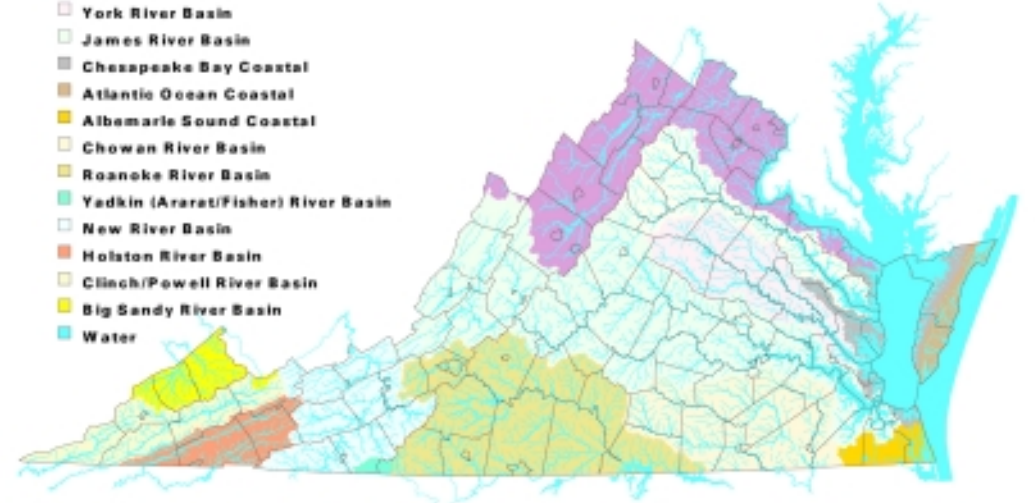


There are as many ways to prevent water pollution as there are ways to use land.

Businesses that require much land such as farming and logging use a variety of best management practices (BMPs) to keep soil, excess fertilizers, animal waste and pesticides from running off woodlands, pastures and fields.

### What's your watershed address?

-  Potomac/Shenandoah River Basin
-  Rappahannock River Basin
-  York River Basin
-  James River Basin
-  Chesapeake Bay Coastal
-  Atlantic Ocean Coastal
-  Albemarle Sound Coastal
-  Chowan River Basin
-  Roanoke River Basin
-  Yadkin (Ararat/Fisher) River Basin
-  New River Basin
-  Holston River Basin
-  Clinch/Powell River Basin
-  Big Sandy River Basin
-  Water



Rivers don't know county boundaries or state borders. It's watersheds that connect us to our waters.



*Bioretention structures are an innovative way to use the land and plants to slow down and filter stormwater runoff.*



Towns and cities manage stormwater from parking lots and streets by installing sediment ponds and filter strips to slow runoff and prevent nonpoint source pollution from entering rivers and streams. Silt fences keep soil from running into waterways from construction activities.