

Anything that is dumped into a storm drain or gutter, or discarded into a creek, ends up at our beaches without being treated.

Here's what you can do to protect and improve water quality:

Clean Up Dog Waste

Dog owners have many different ways of cleaning up after their pets at home. Here are a few that are creek- and ocean-friendly:

- Scoop and place pet waste in the trash.
- Commercial disposal systems, available through pet and garden supply stores and catalogs, use bacterial and enzymatic cultures. These cultures reduce the waste to a liquid, which can be used as a fertilizer.
- Place a plastic bag in a 5 gallon trash can with a lid. When you pick up dog droppings in your yard, put them in that trash can, then cover them with a sprinkling of powdered lime (available at building supply stores) and close the lid. Each time you pick up the yard and add droppings to the container, add more lime. When the container is full, tie the bag closed and put it in your regular trash container.

Reduce the Use of Pesticides and Fertilizers

- First try alternatives to pesticides. Call the Community Environmental Council for more information at 963-0583.
- Don't use pesticides during the wet season as they may be carried into creeks or the ocean by the next storm. Better yet, reduce or eliminate pesticide use.
- When irrigating landscaped areas, avoid over-watering, not only to conserve water but to avoid the discharge of water, which may carry nutrients and pesticides to creeks or the ocean.
- Store pesticides and application equipment properly, and dispose of the used containers at a hazardous waste disposal facility. See the back page of this pamphlet.

Properly Dispose of Pesticides

Dispose of unused pesticides and empty containers at your local hazardous waste facility. Call the Community Environmental Council at 963-0583 for facility hours and hazardous waste information.

Properly Dispose of Yard Waste

Yard waste, trash and sediment, when washed down creeks, can clog storm drains and cause flooding.

Improperly disposed yard waste can also harm aquatic life by clogging the gills of fish, blocking sunlight, and raising water temperatures.

Fertilizer runoff feeds aquatic plants; the plants grow at an unnatural rate and take oxygen away from aquatic life, and the aquatic life dies.

- Compost the material to use in your garden.
- Recycle yard wastes through the curbside recycling program.
- Reduce the amount of waste generated by planting appropriately sized plants.

**Dumping *anything*
into a creek, gutter
or storm drain is
ILLEGAL**

Horse and Other Livestock Waste

Livestock waste contains nutrients that make great fertilizer, but cause problems in creeks and the ocean. It also contains bacteria which, if found at high levels, can trigger beach postings and cause illness.

- Gather up soiled bedding and manure at least 3 times per week from stalls and paddocks.
- Place it in sturdy, insect resistant, leak-proof containers, such as plastic garbage cans with lids, fly-tight wooden or concrete storage sheds, composters, or pits or trenches lined with an impermeable layer.
- Marborg Industries will collect horse waste for composting. Call Marborg at 963-1852 to arrange for a dumpster at your stable.

Motor Oil

Don't allow oil, brake fluid, transmission fluid, antifreeze, solvents or gasoline to be exposed to rainwater or leave your property.

- Used motor oil and antifreeze should be disposed of at a collection facility. For the location nearest you, call 1-800-CLEANUP.
- Catch automotive leaks with a drip pan. Repair leaks immediately.
- Clean up spills immediately with absorbent material such as kitty litter. Dispose of the absorbent as you would hazardous waste.
- Have your car's engine degreased at a commercial facility designed to handle the waste products.
- Wash your car at a car wash that recycles their waste water.

Would you believe...?

MYTH #1

Runoff from streets and storm drains is treated at wastewater treatment plants.

FACT Storm drain runoff in Santa Barbara County is not treated and goes directly into our creeks — what goes into the storm drain ends up at the beach. That is why it is important to insure that pollutants such as animal waste, automotive fluids, garbage and chemicals do not end up in storm drains.

MYTH #2

Most creek pollution comes from a few big polluters.

FACT The well-known stories about environmental problems tend to focus on big, recognizable targets such as industrial factories, leaking toxic waste dumps, and oil spills. As a result, people often forget that the majority of water pollution comes from small sources — especially at the household level.

MYTH #3

The impact of one household doesn't really matter.

FACT Although an individual home might contribute only minor amounts of pollution, the combined effect of an entire neighborhood or city is serious.

MYTH #4

Creek contamination and beach postings are usually caused by chemical pollution such as paints, solvents, and motor oils.

FACT Chemical contamination is always a concern. Yet, bacterial contamination from animal waste, litter, leaking septic tanks, garbage, and green waste also threaten creeks, beaches, wildlife and your health. Beach postings are actually triggered by bacterial contamination.

Want to know more?

Call 1-877-OUR-OCEAN if you see

- illegal dumping
- pollution in a creek
- a clogged storm drain
- a pollutant spill near a gutter, storm drain or creek
- disposal of wastewater into a gutter or storm drain

If you need to dispose of a pollutant:

- Used motor oil, call:
Used Oil Hotline - 800-CLEANUP
- Hazardous waste, call:
(Paint, paint thinner, garden chemicals, etc.)
Community Environmental Council
805-963-0583

For more information on clean water programs

- City of Santa Barbara Creek Restoration & Water Quality Improvement Program:
805-897-2658
www.ci.santa-barbara.ca.us
- Santa Barbara County Project Clean Water:
805-568-3440
www.co.santa-barbara.ca.us/project_cleanwater



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Creekside Concerns



Out of sight, Out of mind?

Part of a unified community effort to clean up Santa Barbara County's creeks and beaches



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So what's the problem?

Our ocean and creeks are polluted

Bacteria and other types of pollution have been found in local creeks and the ocean. Ongoing contamination of these waters has resulted in beach and creek closures, and unconfirmed reports of illness from contact with these polluted waters. Remember, everything that flows into a storm drain or creek ends up in the ocean without being treated.

Our community is working to solve this problem

Project Clean Water is a coalition of nonprofit organizations, businesses, government agencies and concerned citizens. All of these groups have these goals: to improve water quality in our creeks and the ocean, to promote public health and to protect the quality of life in Santa Barbara County for everyone.

You can help

By implementing the solutions in this pamphlet, you can take part in protecting and improving the water quality of local creeks and making our beaches safe again.

