

ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS

Green Tip: Prepared for the Rainy Season?

With the winter rains upon us, we are preparing our homes by cleaning roof gutters and drains in our yard. What other measures can we take to winterize our homes and protect our creeks? Storm water carries pollutants such as oil and grease from cars, litter and pet waste, fertilizers and pesticides from lawns and gardens, and mud from construction activities. These pollutants enter our creeks and are toxic to fish and wildlife. Anything we spill, drop, or throw on the ground can wind up in our local creeks. Here are a few simple steps you can do to protect creeks and the animals that call them home:

- Pick up trash and yard clippings in your yard and in front of your home, this can prevent street flooding and water pollution;
- Store chemicals properly inside the garage;
- Don't fertilize if rain is in the forecast;
- Clean up pet waste and throw in the trash;
- Sweep – don't hose or wash dirt and debris from driveways;
- Clean up vehicle fluid leaks/spills with kitty litter or other absorbent material, sweep it up and throw it into the trash. Keep your car well maintained and leak-free;
- Use a commercial car wash where the wash water doesn't drain to creeks OR give your car a sponge bath rinsing the soapy water into a bucket that you dump into a sink;
- Cover all piles including compost and soil with a tarp or plastic, also keeping the pile at least 2 foot away from the street curb to allow water to flow in the gutter!



Don't Waste the Leaves!

When it rains, leaves are washed from the street gutter into storm drains. Leaves and other organic material break down in creeks depleting the oxygen in the water, which can suffocate fish. You can help by:

- Placing leaves in your yard waste bin or compost leaves for a nutrient-rich fertilizer for your garden;
- Use a mower to chop leaves and apply directly to the soil around shrubs and flower beds;
- For more information on gardening and landscape practices supportive of our local waterways go to <http://www.rwatershed.org/RRFLG/> to download the "Russian River-Friendly Landscape Guidelines".

Report dumping and spills in streets, storm drains, or creeks by calling 707-543-3800.



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