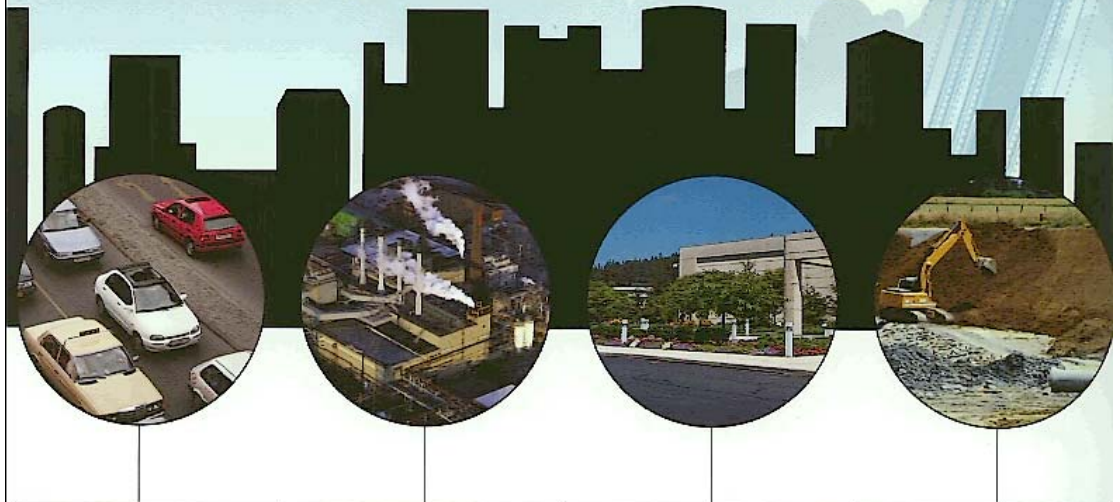


MAKING SENSE of URBAN RUNOFF

Identifying the sources of waste in our water



Oils, grease and metals from parking lots and city streets.

Solid, liquid and airborne industrial waste.

Fertilizer and pesticide residues from commercial properties.

Storm water runoff from new construction.

It's as clear as rain. Storm water runoff poses a serious risk to the health of our lakes, rivers, and ocean environments. From the time storm runoff begins its journey to the ocean, it accumulates dangerous levels of heavy metals, oil, grease, pesticides, industrial chemicals, dangerous coliform bacteria and a frightening variety of other contaminants – lacing our precious water resources with a deadly chemical cocktail. As early as 1992, the EPA estimated that storm water runoff had already impaired 43 percent of estuarine miles, 11 percent of river miles and 24 percent of the lake acreage in the United States.

The sources of these contaminants are as varied as the chemicals themselves. Autos and trucks are major sources of oil, grease and metals like lead, zinc and mercury. Toxic chemicals in paints, cleaners, fuels and pesticides can be found in commercial and residential runoff. Fertilizers, animal waste, and other agricultural by-products can lead to water toxicity by accelerating the growth of algae and the onset of eutrophication.

Even the simple intrusion of sediment, litter, and mud can kill our marine environment by destroying spawning beds, blocking needed sunlight and spreading a destructive blanket over stream and river beds, making it impossible for fish and bottom-dwelling organisms to live and reproduce. The damage extends from the top to the bottom of the food chain.

ocean, streams, lakes, rivers

