

## Introduction:

The ocean, streams, and rivers of Hawaii provide places where people swim, fish, surf, sail, and can enjoy hours of recreational activities. They are also sources for gathering food and are considered home to a fascinating array of marine animals, corals and plants, some of which are found nowhere else on Earth.

This brochure provides information on how storm water runoff can threaten the health of our streams, wetlands, and coastal waters, and what we can do to help. Together we can make a difference to protect Hawaii's water bodies.



## What is storm water?

When it rains, water flows over the ground, over roads, parking lots, streets, yards, and industrial areas. This water is commonly called "storm water." Storm water can become a carrier of pollutants, picking up debris, chemicals and other pollutants like oils, metals, and pesticides. These pollutants can flow into a storm drainage system or directly to a stream, river, wetland, or ocean. Anything that enters a storm drainage system can easily end up in the water in which we might fish, swim or use for other activities.

## Why should we care about storm water runoff?

Polluted storm water runoff can negatively affect the quality of aquatic life and plants in streams and oceans.

- Sediment can cloud water, making it impossible for aquatic plants to grow and also destroy aquatic habitats.
- Trash—plastic bags, bottles, cigarette butts, six-pack rings—can suffocate or disable aquatic life such as fish, turtles, and birds.



- Nutrients from fertilizer can result in algae blooms. When algae die, they decompose, removing oxygen from the water, which causes fish and other organisms to die.
- Bacteria can wash into swimming areas and create health hazards, which results in beach closures.



- Household hazardous materials such as herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, paint, solvents, used motor oil, and other auto fluids can poison aquatic life.

- Discharging pollutants to the storm drain system is against the law.

## Pollution Solutions – What you can do to help:

### Yard Maintenance

- Keep sidewalks, curbs and gutters clean by sweeping up debris and disposing of it in the trash.



- Don't over water your lawn.
- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly, follow the manufacturer's guidelines, and avoid application if the forecast calls for rain.
- Gather grass and tree cuttings and dispose as green waste, or compost your yard trimming. Don't sweep or wash cuttings, or any other debris from your yard, into the gutter and down the storm drain.

### Auto Care

- Under Navy Region Hawaii and Hickam Air Force Base's National Pollutant Discharge (NPDES) Permit with the State of Hawaii, Clean Water Branch, vehicle washing is not allowed on Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam property unless it is for a car wash fundraiser or housing residential area.
- Residential Areas - Wash your car with plain water without using soaps or detergents. If you must wash with detergents, sparingly use environmentally

friendly detergents that are phosphate-free and biodegradable, or go to a commercial car wash that treats or recycles its wastewater.

- Purchase an oil change box available at retail outlets that sell motor oil. Used oil can be drained directly into the box, sealed, and placed into the trash. Don't pour motor oil on the ground or down the storm drain.

**Pet Waste** – Pet waste left on the ground can cause harmful bacteria and nutrients to be washed into the storm drain and eventually into our local waters. So remember to pick up and dispose of pet waste.

**Household Waste** – Properly dispose of household hazardous wastes and use environmentally safe cleaning products, when possible. Never pour household products down the drain, toilet or into the gutter.

**Good Housekeeping at Work** -- Practice good housekeeping and follow best management practices that are appropriate for your work area aboard ship and ashore. This includes regular sweeping and mopping, especially before wash downs; keeping chemicals, paints, fuel and oils properly contained and away from drain inlets; and constructing barriers to prevent soil runoff at construction sites.



## Pollution Prevention

### Partners:

The Clean Water Act establishes environmental programs to protect the Nation's waters. Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Environmental Department oversees a comprehensive Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program. Everyone working together will ensure that future generations can continue to enjoy Hawaii's life-sustaining waters.

- Remember to practice good housekeeping measures.
- Share your knowledge about pollution solutions with others.



### Important Contact Numbers:

- Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Family Housing residents should contact their area manager to report questionable discharges into storm drains.
- On base, report any questionable discharges into storm drain inlets to Navy Region Hawaii's Environmental Department at (808) 471-1171, Ext. 367 or the Hickam Environmental Office at (808) 449-3178.



*Preserving, Protecting, Restoring  
Hawaii's Environment*

## Joint Base Pearl Harbor - Hickam

Protecting Our Valuable Water Resources  
*A Guide to Understanding  
Storm Water*

