

Protecting Washington's waters from stormwater pollution

Did you know Washington has a stormwater runoff problem?

Stormwater runoff is damaging salmon habitat. It's the Number 1 water pollution problem in the urban areas of our state, and it causes and contributes to flooding.

Chances are pretty good you've seen stormwater runoff. It's the water from rain or snow that runs off yards, roofs and roadways. As gravity pulls it downhill into low spots, ditches and storm drains, the water picks up soil, chemicals and other pollutants and carries them into our lakes, rivers and marine waters.

Our waters and salmon as well as other fish and wildlife species aren't the only things at risk. Stormwater problems also affect the health and safety of people.

As we develop land to accommodate Washington's growing population, our state's stormwater problem grows, too. The good news is we can do something about it—all of us.

In Washington, the state Department of Ecology, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and local governments all work together to regulate stormwater.

The key to solving the problem isn't really in the rules and permits. It's in people—how we live on the land and the everyday choices each of us makes.



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Photo: Toni Weyman Droscher



