

# Stormwater Survey

Thank you for taking part in our public outreach survey. Please see responses for the questions answered.

Following is a list of the questions asked, please answer to the best of your knowledge.

1. The Town of Westwood has a Stormwater Hotline.

Did not know

Did Know and who to call

*Westwood has a hotline with an email and phone number to report spills/illegal dumping/discharges by either calling 781-251-2587 or emailing [engineering@townhall.westwood.ma.us](mailto:engineering@townhall.westwood.ma.us) the Department of Public Work.*

2. The following are some possible causes of pollution in local waters. Please indicate if you believe that it is: 1) **significant** source of pollution in Westwood; 2) it may contribute some **small** amount of pollution; or 3) probably is **not** a significant source of water pollution in Westwood.

Runoff from lawns and landscape, including animal waste and fertilizer:

Runoff from roads and parking lots:

Gray water from your toilets, washing machine, and sinks:

*Runoff from lawns and landscaping are a significant source of pollution since it can carry animal waste and fertilizers to our local waters. Runoff from roads and parking lots carry oil and antifreeze. All runoff can be considered a significant source of pollution. Gray water goes into the sanitary sewer system. This water runs through a series of pipes and pump stations before it enters the MWRA sewer system.*

3. Water from neighborhoods and residences that runoff streets, yards, and rooftops goes into a storm system of pipes, ditches, ponds, or storage vaults. To the best of your knowledge, what happens to the water after it enters the storm system?

*In Westwood, the stormwater system is completely separate from the sewer system and therefore stormwater never goes to the sewer pump stations. For residential properties, stormwater is either absorbed into the ground or goes untreated to the nearest body of water. In the business districts, oil/water separators or filter systems are used, prior to leaving the property and entering the drainage system.*

4. The following is a list of things that can get washed into the storm system and eventually into ponds, streams and rivers. Do you believe that in Westwood, it is:

1) **Significant** source of pollution in Westwood; 2) it may contribute some **small** amount of pollution; or 3) probably is **not** a significant source of water pollution in Westwood.

Oils and other fluids from vehicles:

*Oils or greases are known to be toxic to aquatic organisms at relatively low concentrations. They can coat fish gills, prevent oxygen from entering the water, and clog drainage facilities. No amount of oil, grease, or other fluids from vehicles belongs in surface water.*

Soapy water from washing cars on pavement/driveways

*Most soapy water contains phosphates and other chemicals that harm fish and water quality. The phosphates from the soap can cause excess algae to grow. As algae decay, the process used up oxygen in the water that fish need.*

Pet waste left on the ground

*Pet waste is raw sewage! It is full of fecal coliform and can make people and animals sick. When left on the ground, rain or melting snow washes pet waste into the storm drains which in turn makes its way to our streams, ponds and eventually into the Charles and Neponset Rivers.*

Improper disposal of cleaning fluids, paint, and other household hazardous waste

*These types of liquids carry toxic ingredients and harm our environment when not disposed of properly. They promote the growth of algae in ponds, rivers, and bodies of water.*

5. Of the list of products below that some people use on lawns and gardens, how much of each is used on your yard during a typical growing season?

*Chemicals whether weed & feed, pesticides, insecticides, or fungicides can be very toxic to the environment. Use according to the manufacturer's instructions. This also includes organic or slow-released fertilizers. Store the containers in such a manner that if the container leaks or spills, the contents will not discharge, flow, or be washed into the storm drainage system, surface waters, or groundwater. When watering, be mindful that using too much might carry these toxins to the storm drainage system.*

6. When you clean places like your driveway, walkways, or deck, do you typically

*Sweeping or hosing your driveway, walkway or deck is great. It helps keep our community pristine and makes for a wonderful place to be. However, sweeping or hosing trash, yard debris, grass clippings, leaves, dirt, soap, or other cleansers can work their way to our streets. The storm drains are not part of the sewer system, so anything hosed or swept into the street flows untreated into the storm drains and ultimately our ponds, stream, and eventually the Charles and Neponset Rivers. Continue cleaning your driveway, but dispose of the debris properly and avoid using detergents or cleansers if there are going to work their way to the storm drains.*

7. If you own a dog and go for walks, how is the dog waste dealt with?

*By picking up after your dog, you play an important part in keeping Westwood and our streams, ponds, and water bodies clean by preventing urban runoff pollution. It is a simple thing pet owners can do to help protect the environment for all of us.*

8. If the dog waste is picked up, how is it typically disposed of?

*Pet owners need to make sure they pick up after their pets and properly dispose of pet waste in the trash. Proper individual actions can result in significant water quality improvements when carried out by the majority. Unlike some forms of stormwater pollutants, the individual citizens of our community can easily and economically manage pet waste.*

9. At which of the following have you washed your vehicle or had it washed most often in the past year?

*It is okay to wash your car at home, but it is not okay to allow the sudsy wash water into the storm drains. Most soap contains phosphates and other chemicals that harm fish and water quality. If you do wash your car at home, wash it on the lawn where a good amount of the wash water will be filtered by your lawn. A commercial car wash facility, either self-service or machine wash is the preferred place to have your car washed since the water used is recycled, treated, and cleaned so there is no harm to the environment. Cleaning your car the right way helps support a healthy watershed.*

10. If your vehicles leaked or spilled oil or antifreeze onto the pavement, which of the following would you most likely do?

*Left in place and/or hosing the spill off will most likely find its way into the storm drain system. When it rains, water wastes over driveways and streets and flows directly down the nearest storm drain. The stormwater runoff sweeps up everything in its path, including leaves, litter, lawn chemicals, pet waste, garbage and puddles of antifreeze and oil.*

11. Which of the following best describes your attitude toward making changes to help prevent water pollution?

*Pet owners are picking up their pet waste. Gardeners are using lawn and garden fertilizers and pesticides sparingly. Homeowners are making sure that yard clippings are being kept out of the street. Still there is a gap that needs to be closed. Soapy water from washing your car and pet waste left on the ground adds up to a significant amount of urban runoff pollution. Individually we can make difference. Protecting our fish, wildlife, drinking water, and food sources, a long with maintaining the environment will assure a quality life for future generations to come.*

12. Below is a picture of



Anything that enters this goes directly to

*The picture shows a Catchbasin. There are over 2000 catchbasins in Westwood and each one is vital to the storm drain system in town. Anything that enters a catchbasin goes untreated into streams, ponds, wetlands and eventually the Neponset and Charles Rivers.*

If you would like to know what you as a citizen can do to help improve water quality in Westwood, we suggest you visit the links on this page and pass on what you learn to others.