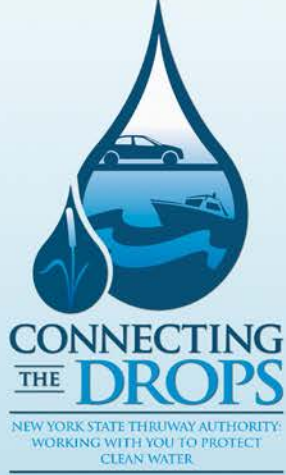


# Clean Water Everyone can Help!



## Why is clean water important to you?

Everyone depends on clean water to live, and therefore, has a responsibility to keep it clean.

In order to protect all of New York's water, it is important to understand how pollution can contaminate our rivers, lakes and streams.

## Why are watersheds important?

We all live in a watershed. What we do, and where we live affects the water quality of our local watershed.

Making sure that we keep our watershed clean and healthy means that we have clean water to drink, can take part in fun recreational activities such as fishing, canoeing and swimming, and have safe habitats for wildlife to live in.

## How do things we do affect the watershed?

When it rains or snows, some of the water is absorbed into the ground through the soil or evaporates back into the air.

The rest of the water, referred to as "stormwater runoff", flows over the ground and can enter streams, creeks, or rivers through storm drains, like the one you may have on your street.

Because hard covered surfaces like streets and driveways can't absorb water, the water flows over the surface and can collect pollutants on the street like motor oil, spilled chemicals, pesticides and litter.

Pollutants are things that harm our natural resources like our air or water.

## What is a watershed?

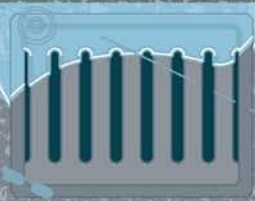
A watershed is an area of land where all the water that falls in it and drains off it goes to the same place.

For example, all of the water in the Hudson River watershed eventually flows into the Hudson River. The entire Hudson River Watershed is 13,400 square miles...an area larger than the state of Massachusetts.

## How does the water become polluted?

Sometimes water can become polluted in obvious ways, like when people throw litter onto the ground that ends up in a local creek.

Other times people may not realize that they could be contaminating their local waters if they are not careful when they do things like wash the car, use too many chemicals on the lawn or don't pick up after their pet.



Only Rain Down the Drain



Drains to Waterway



# What you can do to prevent pollution to waterways.

The New York State Thruway Authority is working to prevent pollution to waterways.

- The New York State Thruway Authority has embarked on a "Connecting the Drops" campaign to help educate you and your friends on the importance of water quality and stormwater pollution prevention.
- Your help is needed to let all New Yorkers know about the important things that can be done as a community to keep the waterways of New York clean.

Here are a couple of things that you can do.

- Never dump anything down the storm drain! It is meant only for rainwater.
- When you see litter pick it up and throw it out.
- Wash the family car on the lawn, not on the road or driveway.
- Ask your parents to minimize the use of fertilizers and pesticides, which can be harmful to the environment.
- Pick up after your pets! Their waste sometimes contains harmful bacteria that can pollute streams and lakes.
- Adopt a local stream and clean it up!

