



## Landscaping and Gardening

In the Santa Clara Valley, storm drains transport water directly to local creeks and San Francisco Bay, without treatment. Stormwater pollution is a serious problem for wildlife dependent on our waterways and for people who live near polluted streams or baylands. Some common sources of this pollution include spilled oil, fuel, and fluids from vehicles and heavy equipment; construction debris; sediment created by erosion, landscaping runoff containing pesticides or weed killers; and materials such as used motor oil, antifreeze, and paint products that people pour or spill into street or storm drain.

Thirteen valley municipalities have joined together with Santa Clara County and Valley Water to educate local residents and businesses to prevent stormwater pollution. Join us in protecting the Bay and local creeks by following these Best Management Practices (BMPs).

### Storm Drain Pollution from Landscaping and Gardening

Many landscaping activities expose soils and increase the likelihood that earth and garden chemicals will run off into the storm drains during irrigation or when it rains. These chemicals can harm wildlife in creeks or the Bay.



*Never allow spills and leaks to enter storm drains. Federal, state, and local regulations prohibit any discharges other than rain into the storm drain.*

### Who should use this brochure?

- Landscapers
- Gardeners
- General contractors
- Home builders
- Developers
- Homeowners

## Doing the Job Right

### LANDSCAPING/GARDEN CONSTRUCTION

- Protect stockpiled landscaping materials from wind and rain by storing them under tarps all year-round. Do not store stockpiles on the street, in the gutter, or near storm drains.
- Stack bagged materials on pallets and under cover.
- Store pesticides, fertilizers, and other chemicals indoors or in a shed or storage cabinet.
- Schedule grading and excavation projects during dry weather.
- Use temporary check dams or ditches to divert runoff away from storm drains.
- Protect storm drains with gravel bags, compost socks, mats, or other sediment controls.
- Provide erosion control for areas of exposed soil using vegetation or blankets.



# Doing the Job Right

## LANDSCAPING/GARDEN MAINTENANCE

- Store materials onsite, not in the street.
- Use pesticides sparingly, and only as a last resort, according to label instructions. Rinse empty containers and use rinsewater as product. Dispose of rinsed, empty containers in the trash.
- Dispose of unused pesticides and fertilizers in accordance with label instructions and at your local hazardous waste collection center.
- Discontinue application of any lightweight or easily erodible landscape material at least 2 days before a forecast rain event or during wet weather.
- Collect lawn and garden clippings, pruning waste, and tree trimmings. Chip if necessary and compost or dispose of as yard waste.
- Do not blow or rake leaves, etc. into the street, or place yard waste in gutters or on dirt shoulders, unless you are piling them for recycling (allowed by San José and unincorporated County only). Sweep up any leaves, litter or residue in gutters or on street, and place in appropriate waste or refuse containers. In San José, residents can leave yard waste for curbside recycling pickup in piles (no larger than 5 feet by 5 feet) in the street, 1 foot from the curb and completely out of the flow line to any storm drain.
- In communities with curbside pick-up of yard waste, place clippings and pruning waste at the curb in approved bags or containers. Otherwise take it to a landfill that composts yard waste. Curbside pickup of yard waste is not available for commercial properties.



## INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) offers effective techniques and less-toxic products for controlling common pests. IPM is a method of controlling pests and weeds using the least toxic methods available through a combination of mechanical, biological and chemical controls.

- For information on less-toxic pest management, visit [MyWatershedWatch.org/pests/](http://MyWatershedWatch.org/pests/)
- For a list of less-toxic pest control products, visit [OurWaterOurWorld.org/pesticide-ingredients](http://OurWaterOurWorld.org/pesticide-ingredients)
- Hire a Santa Clara Valley Green Gardener to design or maintain sustainable landscapes, go to [MyWatershedWatch.org/find-a-green-gardener/](http://MyWatershedWatch.org/find-a-green-gardener/)

## Small Business Hazardous Waste Disposal Program

**Businesses that generate less than 27 gallons or 220 pounds of hazardous waste per month are eligible to use Santa Clara County's Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator Program. Call (800) 207-8222 to learn about proper disposal options and hazardous waste disposal.**

Palo Alto operates a similar program, with a monthly collection, for small businesses. Call the City of Palo Alto, (650) 496-6980, or Clean Harbors, 1-800-433-5060 for information or to schedule an appointment.

## STORMWATER POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCIES

**For spills or materials entering a creek, pond or reservoir call Valley Water's 24/7 Pollution Hotline: 1-888-510-5151**

**For more information on preventing stormwater pollution, contact your local agency during regular business hours:**

Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Saratoga  
(West Valley Communities) ..... (408) 354-4734  
Cupertino ..... (408) 777-3354  
Los Altos ..... (650) 947-2770  
Los Altos Hills..... (650) 941-7222  
Milpitas..... (408) 586-3365

Mountain View ..... (650) 903-6378  
Palo Alto..... (650) 329-2122  
San José ..... (408) 945-3000  
Santa Clara ..... (408) 615-3080  
Unincorporated Santa Clara County..... (408) 918-4609  
Sunnyvale..... (408) 730-7260