What can I do to reduce NPS pollution?

Individuals can play an important role by changing certain everyday habits:

- Dispose of used oil, antifreeze, paints, and other household chemicals properly (do not pour down sink, into storm drain, or on the ground).
- Inspect septic system every couple years to ensure system is working properly.
- Keep litter, pet wastes, grass, leaves, and other debris out of street gutters and storm drains.
- Do not apply more than recommended amount of fertilizers and pesticides to your lawn and garden or, better yet, use a soil test kit.
- Use rain collection devices, like rain barrels, to harvest and store rain water.
- Install stormwater infiltration areas like the rain garden below.

10 Water Conservation Tips

1. **Make sure your faucets are not leaking: A leaking faucet could waste up to 4,000 gal/year. Also, turn off the faucet when shaving or brushing your teeth.**
2. **Run the dishwasher and washing machine only when they are full.**
3. **Defrost food in the refrigerator instead of using running water: A running faucet uses about a gallon of water per minute.**
4. **Keep a container of water in the refrigerator rather than running the water until it is cold.**
5. **Test all toilets regularly for leaks: A leaking toilet could waste up to 100 gal/day.**
6. **Take shorter showers and replace old showerheads: Low flow showerheads can save 3 gal/min.**
7. **Limit grass areas and use trees, shrubs, and other plants that require less water to landscape your yard: Grass turf requires 30-50% more water.**
8. **Water during the coolest part of the day (preferably morning) and never water on windy days: As much as 30% of water used can be lost to evaporation.**
9. **Use a broom rather than a hose to clean decks, sidewalks, and other paved areas: 5 minutes of running the hose uses 25 gallons of water.**
10. **Cover pools to prevent evaporation: An average uncovered pool loses about an inch of water a week because of evaporation.**

Water Harvesting with Rain Barrels

A Water Quality & Conservation Fact Sheet

Adam County Conservation District
670 Old Harrisburg Road, Suite 201
Gettysburg, PA 17325
www.adamscounty.us
717-334-0636

Why use a Rain Barrel?

In towns and developments, water is collected in storm sewer systems and released directly into streams. This direct runoff contributes to flooding and carries with it pollutants that reduce the health of local streams. Stormwater runoff issues increase as the amount of impervious surfaces such as roofs, sidewalks, roads, and parking lots increase.

By collecting this rain before it enters the storm sewers, you are helping to reduce the amount of stormwater that gets discharged into streams. A single rain barrel won't solve the flooding issue in your town, however, it is a good start and it gets other homeowners thinking about stormwater issues.

Not only do rain barrels help reduce runoff, they also help conserve water. You can calculate how much water you can conserve by using this formula.

1 inch of rain on a 1000 sq ft roof yields 623 gallons of water. Calculate the yield of your roof by multiplying the square footage of your roof by 623 and divide by 1000.

For a 1000 sq ft roof, our 60 gallon rain barrels will fill up with less than 1/10th inch of rain.

The rainwater collected and stored in rain barrels is ideal for watering lawns and gardens because it is natural and does not contain chlorine and other chemicals like municipal water.

Tips for using your Rain Barrel

- Do not use collected water for drinking, cooking or bathing.
- Keep the lid secure so children or animals cannot fall into the barrel.
- If a moss killer has been used on the roof, let a few rainfalls occur before collecting the roof runoff.
- If your rain barrel leaks, check to make sure all the fittings are tight.
- Disconnect your rain barrel over winter.

Consider joining multiple barrels for additional capacity!

What is Nonpoint Source Pollution?

When people think of pollution, they probably picture pollution discharging directly into the stream or river from a sewer plant or industry. This type of pollution is known as point source pollution.

Unlike point source pollution, nonpoint source (NPS) pollution comes from many sources and is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground, picking up and carrying human-made and natural pollutants with it.

Examples of Nonpoint Source Pollution:

- Excess fertilizer, herbicide, insecticide, and stormwater runoff from residential and agricultural areas
- Excess nutrients and harmful bacteria from faulty septic systems, pet waste, and livestock animals
- Accelerated sediment runoff from construction sites, dirt and gravel roads, timber operations, and some farming practices
- Oil, salt, paint, heavy metals, and other toxic chemicals from urban developments

Why should I care?

You should care because it affects everyone. We all need clean water to live our daily lives. NPS pollution may ruin your drinking water, kill the fish at your favorite fishing spot, and even pollute your child's swimming hole.