

### **What is stormwater runoff?**

Stormwater runoff is the rain hits the ground and flow off streets, rooftops and lawns. Stormwater is collected by storm drains and drainage swales and flows into streams, rivers and lakes.

### **What is the problem with stormwater runoff pollution anyway?**

Stormwater runoff picks up pollutants and debris as it flows across rooftops and lawns, streets and parking lots. During periods of rainfall, pollutants are picked up and washed directly into our streams, rivers and lakes. Some of these pollutants include oil and grease, harmful bacteria, fertilizers, toxic chemicals and other contaminants which are harmful to both people and aquatic life. A common misconception is that water running off streets and into a storm drain goes to a wastewater treatment plant. It does not. In fact, stormwater usually receives no treatment.

### **What is the source of all these pollutants?**

We all are! The fact is that all of us are part of the stormwater pollution problem. Many of the things that we do on a daily basis including taking care of our lawns, driving our cars, washing our vehicles and walking our pets can contribute to the stormwater pollution. In addition, there are several categories of business activities that can pollute stormwater runoff. Hence, since we are all part of the problem, we all have the opportunity to be part of the "solution to stormwater pollution."

### **Isn't new development in metro Atlanta the cause of all these problems?**

Though there are some problems associated with sediment coming from construction sites in the Atlanta area, many of our current water quality problems are caused by runoff from older, developed areas. We can't solve our problems without dealing with the impacts from all of these areas.

### **How can we solve the problem?**

As the public becomes aware that there are problems with stormwater runoff quality and begins to take action, the water quality of the region's streams, rivers and lakes will improve. As people learn that the storm drain or swale on their street flows directly into a nearby stream, they will be more interested in what drains to, or what is dumped into, the storm drain or swale. They will also be more likely to support the efforts of their local government to address the problems of stormwater runoff quality in their community.