

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

Paint the Town with WAVes

Keep an eye out for groups of kids and adults roaming the streets with cans of spray paint. They are part of an education campaign to remind all of us that storm water pollution begins at the drain on our streets. The Water Action Volunteers program, a cooperative program between the WI Department of Natural Resources and the University of Wisconsin-Extension, provides free stencils to individuals and groups who want to volunteer an afternoon to paint the message: Dump No Waste: Drains to River (or Stream or Lake).

In most communities around Wisconsin, rain or snowmelt washes down streets, parking lots, driveways, sidewalks, yards, and roofs into the drain at the curb. The water enters a series of pipes which collect water from other neighborhoods, finally dumping directly into a nearby lake, stream, river, or wetland.

Stormwater is not cleaned before it empties into our waterways. This means that lawn care bi-products (including grass clippings), automobile products such as antifreeze or oil, and other chemicals can enter the water through the storm sewers. Soil from yards and construction sites or farm fields can turn water cloudy or turbid. Cloudy water makes it difficult for fish to see and feed, and soil particles can act like sandpaper against fish gills, causing them harm. Closed swimming beaches are often the result of large rainstorms because the water washes pet waste and other waste down storm drains. These wastes may contain bacteria that are harmful to humans.

We can help protect our water by using lawn care chemicals sparingly, recycling automobile bi-products, and tossing pet waste in the garbage. A message next to the storm drain is a simple reminder of what we can do to prevent storm water pollution. Join the stenciling campaign by contacting: **(enter a contact name, phone number, date and time of stenciling project)**.