

Preventing Storm Water Pollution: *What We Can Do*

~Employee Training Series~

Parks and Grounds Maintenance

PREPARED IN COOPERATION WITH THE Texas Commission on Environmental Quality AND
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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Parks and Grounds Maintenance

- Employees who maintain our parks and landscaped areas can help reduce water pollution by following precautions in their daily activities.
 - Plant Selection
 - Watering
 - Debris Management
 - Soil Management
 - Pesticide and Herbicide Practices

Plant Selection

- Utilize native or adapted perennial vegetation to reduce water, fertilizer, and pesticide needs.
- Use Texas SmartScape™ as a plant selection and plant care tool.



Watering

- Avoid over-watering to prevent excess runoff.
- Avoid runoff by adjusting watering time and direction and volume of spray heads.
- Check soil moisture and water only when the top 4" to 5" of soil is dry.



Watering

- Monitor rainfall and turn off sprinklers during rainy weather.
- Install rain and freeze sensors on automated sprinkler systems where possible.



Debris Management

- Mow grass as high as possible and leave clippings on the lawn.
- Compost leaves for use as a soil amendment or shred and add to flower beds as mulch.



Debris Management

- Sweep paved surfaces or blow clippings and trimmings onto grass rather than hosing down.
- Never dispose of grass clippings, leaves, or other debris in the storm drain.
- Remove accumulated litter and debris from storm drain inlets.



Soil Management

- Aerate and add compost to the soil to reduce fertilizer needs, improve drainage, and promote root growth.
- Have soil tested well before the application season to determine fertilizer needs.
- Limit soil erosion by planting vegetation on bare areas and using mulch or matting for landscaped areas.



Pesticide and Herbicide Practices

- Follow safety, storage and disposal procedures for pesticides and herbicides.
- Follow label directions precisely when mixing or applying pesticides or herbicides.
- Mix pesticides and herbicides where spills will not soak into the ground or runoff into the storm drainage system.



Pesticide and Herbicide Practices

- Use landscaping pesticides and herbicides only as needed.
- Use non-toxic substitutes for chemicals when possible.
- Carefully select the most appropriate product for the problem to be treated.
- Apply pesticides and herbicides to the problem area only, versus application over a wider area.



Pesticide and Herbicide Practices

- Avoid stray product from being deposited on streets or other paved surfaces where it may be washed into the storm drain system.
- Don't apply chemicals near sensitive areas including streams, lakes, wetlands, or drainageways.



Pesticide and Herbicide Practices

- Don't apply during windy conditions or when rain is predicted within 24 hours.
- Report any suspected problems regarding pesticide or herbicide applications.



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*Protecting water quality requires
that all employees do their part to
prevent storm water pollution.*

