



Excerpt from the Chesapeake Bay Website

"Fish, plants and birds are not the only members of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem, humans are a large part of it as well. You may think you have very little impact on the Bay, but collectively, the 16.6 million people living in the Chesapeake watershed play a very significant role in the health of the Bay and its many tributaries. It will take the actions of all of us, from changing to more Bay-friendly habits to exploring the natural wonders the Chesapeake region has to offer, for Bay restoration to be a success."

What effect does ATGLEN STORMWATER RUNOFF have on the local streams, the Octoraro Watershed and the Chesapeake Bay?

Submitted by Councilman – Larry Lavenberg

What do you really know about stormwater? That's the runoff from melting snow and rain, and it picks up dirt, chemicals, oil, grass clippings, and pet waste as it runs off of hard surfaces like roads, sidewalks, and roofs. It's carried by the gutter system to the storm drains that lead directly to the nearest stream. That's right, directly to the nearest stream. Stormwater is **not** treated in any way by the Atglen Sewer Treatment Plant.

The single largest water pollution source created by cities, towns, and boroughs like Atglen is stormwater runoff. The stormwater, untreated, runs into our local streams, then on to the Octoraro Creek, considered a Susquehanna River tributary, and part of the Octoraro Watershed situated in both Chester and Lancaster counties. So, the stormwater from Atglen with its dirt, chemicals, oil, grass clippings, and pet waste ends up in the Chesapeake Bay.

Every Atglen resident can help to improve the water quality of our local streams, the Octoraro watershed, and the Chesapeake Bay by taking personal responsibility and following some simple guidelines.

GUIDELINES FOR CLEANER STORMWATER RUNOFF

YARD WASTE

Grass clippings and leaves, when left in the gutter, are swept into storm drains creating a clogged drain system and increasing borough maintenance expenses. They also act just like fertilizer in the water and can stimulate algae growth and add to a fish kill. The best way to reduce this condition is to sweep up the grass clippings from the sidewalk and street gutter in front of your residence. Better yet, MULCH! Grass clippings are 90% water and decompose quickly.

Atglen Borough has an active program for the removal of leaves in the fall that usually begins on the first Monday in November and continues every Monday thereafter, weather permitting, until all of the leaves are down.

PET WASTE

Pet waste is like any other waste; it's loaded with microbes that can harm human health. When we leave pet waste on sidewalks and streets, rain water picks it up and carries it to the nearest storm drain where it contaminates the water. Please be responsible, pick it up, and dispose of in the trash or toilet.

FERTILIZER

Get your soil tested first. Grass can only take up so much fertilizer, so applying more than necessary wastes money and poses a water pollution threat. Sweeping excess fertilizer off the driveway and sidewalk back onto the lawn helps contain fertilizer. When fertilizer reaches streams, it encourages algae to grow and when algae blooms die off, they use up so much of the water oxygen it can cause a fish kill.

BACKYARD MECHANICS

Everyone likes to save a buck by doing simple automotive maintenance tasks like changing motor oil. Motor oil as well as other automotive fluids contains toxic chemicals that are harmful to humans and animals. Never dump used motor oil on the ground or down storm drains. Recycle all used motor oil by taking it to a service station or recycling center. Wash your car on the grass so soapy water soaks into the ground.

OTHER HAZARDOUS WASTES

Many common household products like drain and oven cleaners, paint thinner, mothballs, etc. contain toxic ingredients and when they are improperly used or discarded become a threat to streams, lakes, watersheds and the general public health. Do not pour hazardous products down any drain or toilet. Do not discard with regular household trash. Read product labels and use natural and less toxic alternatives.

PLAIN OLD LITTER

Put litter in the trashcan. Litter will find its way into the storm drain if we are not being responsible and vigilant.

We must all do our part to maintain a healthy watershed. For more tips and information visit the Chesapeake Bay website at <http://www.chesapeakebay.net>