



Loudoun County lies within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Land use, agricultural activities, and stormwater pollution in Loudoun County affect the health of the Bay.

**FOR STORMWATER INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Department of General Services  
Steve Plante, Chief,  
Stormwater Management  
steve.plante@loudoun.gov  
(571) 258-3227

**FOR CONCERNS/COMPLAINTS RELATED TO EROSION CONTACT:**

Erosion & Sediment Control hotline:  
(703) 737-8746

**OR VISIT:**

[www.loudoun.gov/stormwater-complaint](http://www.loudoun.gov/stormwater-complaint)

**FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, VISIT:**

Chesapeake Bay  
Foundation <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/issues/issue/sediment/>

*Loudoun County appreciates your help in protecting our valuable water resources.*

Loudoun County  
Department of General Services  
801 Sycolin Road, Suite 300  
Leesburg, VA 20175



Help Protect Loudoun County's  
Streams and Lakes

**A Resident's Guide  
to Sediment  
Reduction for a  
Cleaner Environment**



**Be the Solution to  
Stormwater Pollution**



# the problem

When it rains, rainwater flows off of rooftops and over the lawn, down the driveway and sidewalks—picking up sand, silt, clay, salt, and debris -- and into the storm drain. The water eventually discharges into a natural body of water. Allowing grass clippings, fallen leaves, and yard trimmings or sand and salt from street treatment efforts during snow and ice events to enter the storm drain system, instead of sweeping them up, contributes to stormwater pollution.

**Although sediment naturally occurs from weathering rocks and animals, decomposing plants and animals, excessive amounts of sediment clouds streams and rivers harming fish and aquatic life and fills up flood protection structures, reducing their effectiveness.**



Allowing excessive sediment to flow off of your property can affect the County in the following ways:

- Sediment fills up storm drains and catch basins that are intended to carry water away from roads and homes, increasing the potential for flooding.
- Sediment makes stream water cloudy, impacting the ability for vegetation to grow underwater, can clog fish and aquatic life.

# the facts

Intense storms produce a lot of water that can flow quickly off property and into streams and waterways. That runoff also brings along other things-- things as small as tiny clay particles and as large as boulders can be moved by stormwater. Fast-moving water picks up, suspends, and moves particles more easily than slow-moving waters. This is why rivers are more muddy-looking during storms— they are carrying a lot more sediment than they carry during a low-flow period. So much sediment is carried during storms that over one-half of all the sediment moved during a year might be transported during a single stormy period. Bits of debris and dirt, or sediment, can also carry other pollutants that further degrade the health of our streams. It is estimated that sediment pollution in the U.S. costs \$16 billion in environmental damage annually.

Natural erosion produces only 30 percent of the total sediment in the United States. Sediment that is washed into waterways as a result of human activities accounts for the remaining 70 percent.



The most concentrated sediment releases come from construction activities, including relatively minor home-building projects. It can also come from areas in your yard where soil is exposed for prolonged periods.

# the solution

By keeping soil and debris from washing off of your property you help to keep our streams and the living things in them, healthy.

## What you can do:

### Yard Work

- Plant and mulch the areas of your yard where there is exposed soil.
- Keep leaves and grass out of streets, curbs, drainage ditches, and storm drains.
- In areas where it is difficult to maintain healthy plants, because of shade or heavy foot traffic, use mulch or gravel.

### Around the House

- Wash your car while it is parked on the grass rather than the driveway or street, or take it to a commercial car wash.
- Whenever you disturb the ground, creating a new garden, repairing an irrigation line, bumping out the back of the house; make sure you or your contractors cover or contain the loose soil, especially before strong storm events.
- After snow and ice events, where roads have been treated with sand and salt; sweep sidewalks, curb and drainage areas around your property. Keep those particles of dirt, sand and debris off the paved areas so that it does not become sediment in our streams and rivers.
- Always opt for raking and sweeping to keep things tidy around your home. Using the hose to wash down areas is tempting, but it contributes unwanted sediment loading to nearby waters.