



# How to improve water quality

## Reduce runoff and prevent pollution to improve our water

Much of the rainwater that falls in urban areas runs off rooftops and driveways to streets; through storm sewers; and finally, to wetlands, lakes, streams, or rivers without proper water quality treatment. As it travels, water picks up a variety of pollutants. You can help keep excess water and pollutants from reaching the storm drains and our neighborhood water bodies.



Rainwater goes in storm drains and flows through storm sewers to wetlands, lakes, streams, or rivers without going to a water treatment facility.

### Divert rooftop water runoff from hard surfaces:

- Move or extend downspouts onto a vegetated area, away from driveways and hard surfaces

### Reduce runoff from your property:

- Capture runoff in a raingarden or convert lawn to native plants or deep-rooted grasses

### Properly dispose of pet waste:

- Scoop the poop, and seal the waste in a plastic bag before throwing it into your garbage



The Vermillion River Watershed encompasses an area of approximately 335 square miles, including portions of two counties and all or portions of 20 cities, towns, and townships. The main stem of the river begins in southeastern Scott County in New Market Township flowing east through central Dakota County, passing over a waterfall in the City of Hastings, and then discharging to the Mississippi River both through a northerly flowing outlet near the City of Hastings as well as through a southerly flowing outlet near the City of Red Wing, Minnesota.

#### VERMILLION RIVER WATERSHED JOINT POWERS BOARD

- Commissioner Mike Slavik
- Commissioner Tom Wolf
- Commissioner Mary Liz Holberg



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#### Water efficiently:

- Water in the morning. Cooler temperature, less wind, and reduced sunlight cut evaporation loss and reduce chance for fungal growth
- Sprinkle only plants, not the sidewalk
- Let grass grow longer to create a healthier root system

#### Plant native plants:

- Replace some of your thirsty lawn with native plants, shrubs, or trees. They are lower maintenance, require less watering, and absorb more rainwater than turf.

#### Reduce fertilizer use:

- Use fertilizers containing zero phosphorus. Commercial fertilizers have three numbers on the front label; the middle number refers to the concentration of phosphorous.

#### Compost yard waste:

- Mow the lawn so that you discharge grass clippings on the grass, not onto sidewalks, streets, and driveways
- Leave grass clippings on your lawn when you mow; decomposing grass clippings offer the same benefits as fertilizer

#### Reduce pollution from hard surfaces:

- Clean up oil, gas, radiator fluid and other leaks and spills in your driveway with absorbent cat litter, then place in the garbage; fix persistent leaks
- Sweep any fertilizer spilled on the driveway or sidewalk into the grass
- Sweep up grass clippings, leaves, and dirt (including from in the street)

