Green Living 101: Best Management Practices for Stormwater by Sharon Strock

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Itâ€™s well-known already that the pollutants coming from stormwater runoffs can degrade existing rivers, wetlands, creeks, oceans, and other habitats of water organisms. Local authorities are keen on implementing proper practices on how to manage stormwater runoff, which occurs when precipitation from rain or snowmelt flows over the land surface, as it picks up and carries with it different pollutants found on paved surfaces such as sediment, nitrogen, phosphorus, bacteria, oil and grease, trash, pesticides, and metals. To give you a heads up, here are just the simplest yet most effective ways on how you can manage stormwater yourself.

The Rule When Cleaning your Paintbrush

If youâ€™re done painting the exterior or interior component of your home, clean your paintbrush in the laundry trough or in the garden so that the toxic chemicals coming from the paint wonâ€™t flow to stormwater drain. As you know, the compounds found in paint are toxic and can contaminate existing waterways. Use a modern airbrush instead when painting your home since it doesnâ€™t require cleaning after use.

Place a Large Litter Bin in Your Home

This may be simple, but it can make a great impact to prevent stormwater pollution. Having a litter bin reduces your tendency to throw away litter in the street, especially in stormwater drains. Litter bins arenâ€™t only storage units used to prevent harmful contaminants form accumulating in waterways; but theyâ€™re also a great method to keep your street and home free from trash all the time.

The Rule When Cleaning the Footpath or Garage

Itâ€™s advisable to clean your homeâ€™s footpath or the flooring of the garage from time to time to keep everything spick and span. However, for effective stormwater BMP, itâ€™s best to sweep the dirt away rather than use a water hose so the contaminants wonâ€™t get carried into the drainage system. Have a handy waste bin nearby to store all the accumulated dust and dirt.

Consider Rain Water Harvesting System

One of the best stormwater BMPs is having a rainwater system installed in your home. As you know, a rainwater harvesting system is used to collect water and filter it from contaminants so it can be sustainable for both inside and outside home use. Itâ€™s not only a great way to conserve water; it also lessens stormwater pollution since accumulated water doesnâ€™t flow to storm drains.

Consider Composting

Effective stormwater BMPs include having a compost pit available in your backyard. You can place garden clippings, pet waste, tree prunes, leaves, and other biodegradable trashes in the pit so they wouldnâ€™t accumulate on the street and in storm drains. For more information, visit epa.vic.gov.au/water/stormwater/stormwater_tips.asp.

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