

## Lawn Care to Protect Water Quality

### Did You Know...

*North Carolina's number one water pollution problem is Stormwater Runoff?*

As stormwater flows across impervious surfaces or exposed soil, it picks up various pollutants, such as oil & grease, excess nutrients, bacteria, trash and sediment. Polluted stormwater flows down our storm drains and through our ditches where it is discharged, **UNTREATED**, into our streams, rivers, and lakes. Stormwater runoff pollution can adversely impact aquatic ecosystems and our **drinking water supplies**.



### Did You Also Know...



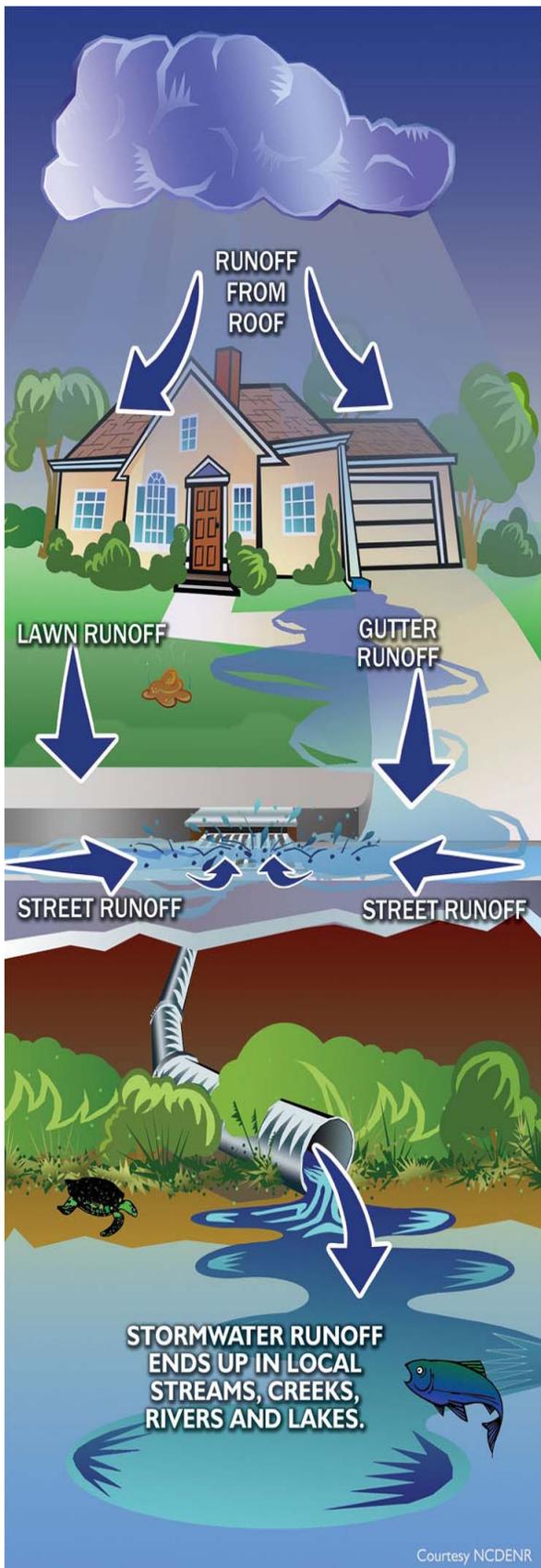
It is **ILLEGAL** to purposefully allow excess fertilizer, pesticides, lawn clippings and other yard waste to reach the Town of Hillsborough's stormwater system? The Town's stormwater system includes storm drains, catch basins, pipes, open channels, ditches, swales, as well as other man-made and natural stormwater runoff conveyances. This includes allowing chemicals and yard waste to reach streets and sidewalks where it can be washed into the stormwater system.

## A Few Words About Riparian Buffers

One of our best tools to protect water quality are riparian buffers. Riparian buffers are undisturbed, naturally forested areas along streams, lakes, ponds, rivers and other surface water bodies. In the Town of Hillsborough, that buffer is a minimum of 50-feet and is regulated from development. Riparian buffers provide important functions which include:

- Filters pollutants such as sediment, nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus), pesticides and fertilizers;
- Reduces erosion and keeps stream banks from collapsing;
- Mitigates flooding downstream by absorbing stormwater and slowly releasing it;
- Moderates stream temperature and the amount of sunlight to the stream.

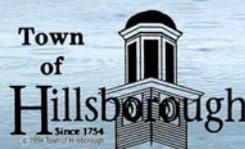
# 10 Ways YOU Can Protect Water Quality in YOUR Backyard!



1. Leave grass clippings on your lawn and/or use a mulching blade on your mower. Grass clippings are a natural, nontoxic fertilizer.
2. If you don't want to leave clippings on the lawn, compost them or dispose of them in your municipal yard waste collection.
3. Don't put grass clippings or other yard waste into street curbs or ditches. Yard waste washes into waterways and feeds problem-causing algae.
4. Get your soil tested so you know exactly what fertilizer you need.
5. Sweep up ANY fertilizer that falls on hard (impervious) surfaces such as driveways and sidewalks.
6. Use fertilizer, pesticides and herbicides sparingly, if at all.
7. DO NOT APPLY fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides if the forecast calls for rain. If it rains, products will wash off into waterways before it has a chance to work.
8. Use mulch to keep weeds out of flower beds and landscape areas; learn about integrated pest management.
9. Maintain healthy riparian buffers and vegetate bare areas to reduce erosion.
10. Consider using native plants in your landscape which reduce the need for chemicals and are more drought resistant.

**Remember...**  
**Our Stormwater Drains to**  
**the Eno River!**

For more information, contact:



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