

# Watershed Protection Tips

## Commercial Pesticide, Herbicide & Fertilizer Application

### How Do Pest, Weed and Landscape Management Chemicals Affect the Watershed?

Careless application and overuse of any pesticide, herbicide or fertilizer is a key contributor to stormwater pollution. When released into the storm drain system, these chemicals can harm unintended insects, plants and animals. You are responsible for preventing this from happening.

### Best Management Practices

- Apply pesticides and herbicides according to the label.
- Choose the least toxic sprays based on the characteristics of the target site and type of pest or weed.
- Consider the use of environmentally friendly chemical alternatives such as insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils and biological controls.
- Become familiar with Integrated Pest Management (IPM) options to reduce the need for chemical applications through combining biological, cultural, and physical tools. Go to [www.ipm.ucdavis.edu](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu)
- Spot treat instead of treating the entire area.
- Apply post-emergence herbicide when weeds are at their most vulnerable growth stage.
- To control weeds, use mulch, drip irrigation and hand pulling when possible.
- Apply chemical fertilizer only as needed, when plants can best use it, and when the potential for it being carried away by runoff is low.
- Calibrate equipment and replace worn nozzle tips and faulty gauges, before mixing and loading pesticides.
- Store pesticides in a covered area in their original containers or in the applicator; use secondary containment if possible.
- Maintain a buffer zone around wells and surface water to avoid contamination.
- Apply chemicals only in the morning and on wind-free days to avoid spray drift.
- Clear, remove and recycle yard debris such as leaves and grass cuttings by placing them in yard waste bins or composting.
- "Avoid blowing yard waste into the gutter, street or storm drain where it can clog storm drains and cause flooding. Organic waste and rotting plant material reduce available oxygen in water for aquatic life and can increase the presence of harmful bacteria.
- Avoid banned pesticides including those containing diazinon or chlorpyrifos and dispose of them at local Household Hazardous Waste Collection events or centers. \*
- Avoid applications within 24 hours of a predicted storm forecast or after an irrigation event where water is still leaching or running.
- Avoid using copper-based tree sprays and copper sulfate root killing products.

Know that no landscape will ever be completely pest-free or weed-free.

For more information on preventing stormwater pollution visit:  
<https://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/planning/stormwater.htm>

To report an illicit discharge please call:  
**707 - 234 - 6679**



### What Is Our Watershed?

Our watershed is the total land area from which stormwater drains into streams, rivers or other bodies of water. The storm drain system is a vast network of gutters, pipes and open channels designed for flood control, which directs untreated stormwater away from our communities. It is both illegal and harmful to allow solid or liquid wastes, including organic materials of any kind, into the storm drain system.

\* Contact: [www.mendocycle.org](http://www.mendocycle.org) to view information about Household Hazardous Waste collection event in your area.



The Watershed Should  
Only Shed Water