

# WATERSHED FRIENDLY SPRING CLEANING

*4 simple steps to a clean home and clean waterways!*



WATERSHED COUNCIL

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Whether we like it or not, the spring means spring cleaning for many of us. Wherever you are doing your cleaning – inside the house, in the garage, out on the deck, or in the driveway – you can have an impact on your local waterways. Here are a couple simple steps for you to remember for keeping your waterways healthy and clean!



1

**Dispose of Household Hazardous Waste Properly** – If you have old oil-based paint, solvents, dead batteries or other substances from your garage or home, remember to dispose of them properly. This means No dumping in stormdrains, flushing down toilets or throwing in the trash. Substances like these are considered household hazardous waste (HHW) and must be disposed of in a designated location to help protect your local water quality. To find out more about HHW collection days, you can contact your county health department or local government. Links to HHW disposal information by county is listed below:

**Macomb County** – <http://health.macombgov.org/Health-Programs-EnvironmentalHealth-RiskAssessment-HouseholdWaste>

**Oakland County** – <https://www.oakgov.com/health/information/Pages/Hazardous-Materials-and-Household-Waste.aspx>



2

**Sweep Instead of Hose** – If you are cleaning up your driveway or sidewalks, please remember to use a broom to sweep onto your lawn instead of a hose to remove dirt and debris. When you hose the debris from your driveway or sidewalks, the runoff you create goes into stormdrains and out to your local rivers and streams.



image credit: [www.helpsaveearth.org](http://www.helpsaveearth.org)



image credit: <http://www.cranbrookfreshwaterforum.org/save-the-lakes-adults.html>

3

**Don't dump or flush medications** – Recent studies have detected low levels of prescription drugs, including opiates, and over the counter medications in the drinking water supplies of 24 major metropolitan areas across the country, including Detroit. To prevent this from happening, make sure you take your unwanted or expired medications to designated disposal sites – typically your county sheriff's department. If you are a resident of Wayne County, contact your local pharmacy or sheriff's department for safe disposal. Below are links to Oakland and Macomb County's medication disposal programs:



**Macomb County** – <http://health.macombgov.org/Health-Programs-EnvironmentalHealth-RiskAssessment-MedicationDisposal>

**Oakland County** – [https://www.oakgov.com/sheriff/Pages/community\\_services/operation\\_medicine\\_cabinet.aspx](https://www.oakgov.com/sheriff/Pages/community_services/operation_medicine_cabinet.aspx)

image credit: Fleming, Nolen, Jez, LLP - <https://www.fleming-law.com/blog/2016/october/taxotere-maker-allegedly-failed-to-warn-patients/>

4

**Use natural cleaning products** – If you plan to wash your outdoor furniture, windows, deck, car, etc. make sure the cleaning products you use are free of chemicals, phosphates and water-based only. You can also look up a DIY recipe for natural cleaner. Never do washing or rinsing on your driveway. Instead do it on the grass and far from a river, lake or stream to prevent runoff from entering stormdrains. When washing your car, using a car wash is even better as the drains do not directly connect to local waterways.



image credit: <http://formulacorp.com/all-natural-cleaning-products/>

**For more information on ways to help protect water quality in your watershed, contact the Clinton River Watershed Council at 248-601-0606 or [contact@crwc.org](mailto:contact@crwc.org).**

Sources:

EPA's "Wash Your Car the Right Way" - [https://cfpub.epa.gov/npstbx/files/KSMO\\_CarWashing.pdf](https://cfpub.epa.gov/npstbx/files/KSMO_CarWashing.pdf)

University of Rhode Island's "Stormwater Solutions Monthly Tips – March: Spring Cleaning Sweeps In" - <https://web.uri.edu/riss/monthly-tip-march-2012/#more-762>