

# Stormwater Walk

## What is Stormwater runoff?

Stormwater runoff occurs when water from rain or snowmelt flows over the ground. Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, wetland, or coastal water. If stormwater runoff is too dirty, it can be bad for fish and other animals that live in the water.



It is important to keep our streets, sidewalks, and yards clean so that when it rains water can soak into the ground and not become dirty stormwater runoff. Take a walk around your neighborhood to see how stormwater runoff is managed in your community!

### Items Needed

Stormwater Checklist  
Notepad  
Pen

## Stormwater Checklist

- Grab an adult and wear appropriate clothes and shoes for walking outside.
- Look for any puddles of water on the ground and jump in them to see how deep they are.
- Look for any leaves, sticks, or trash in the water or on the ground, and pick up any trash you see.
- Look for any storm drains or gutters along the sidewalk, and notice whether they are clean or clogged.
- Observe how the water flows towards the storm drains or away from them and try to determine why.
- Look for any green spaces or gardens that might be soaking up water and see if you can find any frogs or insects.
- Listen for any sounds of water flowing and try to locate the source of the sound.
- Notice any smells that might be associated with stormwater, such as a musty or earthy scent.
- Use your imagination to think about where the water goes after it goes down the storm drain.
- Make note of interesting things you see along the way and write down any questions you have.
- When you're done, talk to an adult about what you learned and how you can help keep stormwater clean.

# Definitions

## Pervious Surfaces

Surfaces that allow water to pass through.



## Green Roofs

Gardens that are planted on rooftops that soak up rainwater and reduce stormwater runoff.



## Stormwater Drains

Prevent flooding by redirecting rainwater and melted snow off streets and paved surfaces into a natural body of water.



## Rain Gardens

Gardens with special plants and soil that help soak up the rainwater.



## Impervious Surfaces

Surfaces that will not allow a liquid to pass through.



## Retention Pond

Special pond that collects and stores extra rainwater that can be used later when needed.



## Rain Barrels

Containers to collect rainwater from rooftops. The water can be used later in lawn or garden areas.



## Swales/Ditches

Collects extra rainwater and guides it to another place, like a lake or river, where it won't cause problems.

