

MAP YOUR STORMWATER



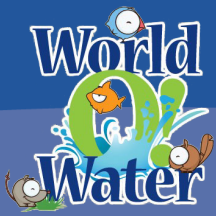
A watershed is an area of land that drains all the streams and rainfall to a common outlet such as the outflow of a reservoir, mouth of a bay, or any point along a stream channel. Watersheds can be as small as a footprint or large enough to encompass all the land that drains water into rivers that drain into the Mississippi River and to the Gulf of Mexico.

In this activity, track where stormwater (rain and snowmelt) might flow around your home to better understand your watershed.

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

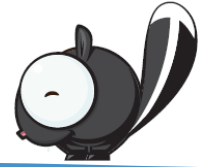
- As our population has grown, natural landscapes, such as prairies and forests, have been replaced by agricultural land and sprawling cities. Stormwater, (rain and snowmelt) now flows as runoff across the ground and over hard surfaces.
- Stormwater running over roofs, driveways, and roads will pick up pollutants such as oil, fertilizers, pesticides, dirt/sediment, trash, and animal waste. As water flows across hard surfaces and down to storm drains, the pollution it carries is taken to local waterways without any form of filtration or treatment.
- The hard surfaces in our cities increase the speed and volume of stormwater that reaches our waterways and can cause stream bank erosion.
- Following the path of stormwater around your home can help you understand what sorts of pollution your stormwater may be carrying. With that knowledge, you help reduce water pollution in your community.





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HOW TO DO THE ACTIVITY:



- Select an impermeable (hard) surface as your starting location. Great places to start this are at the end of your driveway, the end of your downspout, or the sidewalk closest to your house.
- Draw a map of the area around your starting location. Include features such as roads, buildings, sidewalks, streetlights, trees, grass, flowerbeds, etc.
- Pour a pitcher/bottle of water on the hard surface at your starting location. Follow the water as it trickles or runs down your watershed. As you follow the water, add to your map. Use a blue crayon or marker to draw a line on your map where your water flows.
- If the water stops flowing, refill your water bottle and pour more water starting from where the water stopped. Continue this process until the water flows into a stormdrain or finds a permeable area where the water seeps into the ground.

CONSIDER THIS:

What pollution do you think the stormwater around your house picks up as it travels?

Is there anything you could do around your home or in your neighborhood to reduce pollution?

Want to learn more? Check out <https://omahastormwater.org/residential/>

Want to help out? Sign up for the Clean Waters Challenge at <https://www.keepomahabeautiful.org/clean-waters-challenge.html>

