

# Household Cleaners in Stormwater

## How do household cleaners get into stormwater?

Household cleaners can enter stormwater by improper disposal through stormwater drains. Products like bleach, car cleaning solutions, detergents, and even soap can contain toxic ingredients. Once those products enter stormwater drains, they can immediately impact aquatic ecosystems.



## Why is this pollution bad?

Stormwater systems discharge directly into water sources such as rivers and streams. In the Town of Glenville, stormwater is discharged into the Mohawk River. Build up of toxic substances over time can threaten both water quality and aquatic life. Research is being conducted to determine the effects of stormwater pollution on ecosystems, but there is evidence to suggest that high enough concentrations of specific toxins can kill off species of fish. The pollution can also negatively impact water quality, which prevents people from enjoying recreational water-related activities. In conclusion, more research needs to be completed before we can understand the full effects that household product pollution has on aquatic ecosystems. However, it is still important to be aware of the possible toxins in your cleaning products and how to dispose of them properly.

## Preventative Measures:

### DON'T DUMP

Never dump anything down stormwater drains– it is both illegal and harmful. Properly dispose of cleaning products by checking the product's label or website for instructions. Deliver it to a hazardous waste drop-off location if applicable (linked below).

### FIND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

Only buy the amount of product you need to prevent excess waste. Buy nonhazardous options when possible. Make your own non-toxic cleaning solutions from simple ingredients (linked below).

## Citations

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### **Schenectady County Hazardous Waste Drop Off Information:**

<https://www.schenectadycounty.com/hhw>

### **Make your own cleaning products:**

[https://static.ewg.org/pdf/EWG\\_SpringCleaningGuide-2017.pdf](https://static.ewg.org/pdf/EWG_SpringCleaningGuide-2017.pdf)

<https://crwp.org/index.php/homeowners/tips-for-clean-streams>

### **Buy green cleaning products:**

<https://www.epa.gov/greenerproducts/greening-your-purchase-cleaning-products-guide-federal-purchasers>

[https://www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners/content/top\\_products/](https://www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners/content/top_products/)

### **Other resources:**

“Hazardous Household Chemicals.” Protect Wisconsin Waterways, [protectwiwaterways.org/learn-about-stormwater/hazardous-household-chemicals/](http://protectwiwaterways.org/learn-about-stormwater/hazardous-household-chemicals/).

Household Guide to Preventing Stormwater Pollution. Western New York Stormwater Coalition, [www2.erie.gov/environment/sites/www2.erie.gov/environment/files/uploads/pdfs/ECS\\_Household%20Guide.pdf](http://www2.erie.gov/environment/sites/www2.erie.gov/environment/files/uploads/pdfs/ECS_Household%20Guide.pdf).

Make Your Home the Solution to Stormwater Pollution! United States Environmental Protection Agency, Jan. 2003, [www3.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/solution\\_to\\_pollution.pdf](http://www3.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/solution_to_pollution.pdf).

“Nutrient Pollution: What You Can Do In Your Home.” EPA, United States Environmental Protection Agency, [www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/what-you-can-do-your-home](http://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/what-you-can-do-your-home).

