

Town of Friday Harbor presents:

11 Easy Steps to Improve our Stormwater & Harbor

It is important that we all take ownership and responsibility for the quality of our stormwater, especially the water which drains directly into the harbor. There are a number of simple things that we all can do to help preserve our marine environment. These suggestions are meant to be a common-sense, low cost approach to help improve the quality of our stormwater. Here is a list of ideas and actions that can help preserve the pristine waters of the San Juan Islands:

- 1) Stormwater flows downhill. It all ends up in the harbor, so never dump anything into a storm drain. The only thing that should be going into a stormwater system is rainwater. Please dump mop buckets into the sink so that the water can be treated at our sanitary sewer plant.
- 2) Even if a product is labeled "biodegradable", it is still not allowed to go into the storm drains or roadside ditches.
- 3) Instead of hosing off the sidewalk, parking area or driveway, sweep up the dirt and put it in the trash. Rinse water will pick up dirt and other pollutants on the way to the water.
- 4) Leaky dumpsters can contribute pollutants to stormwater. Keep rainwater out of your dumpster by closing the lid. Notify your waste hauler if your dumpster is leaking and they can repair or replace it.
- 5) If you need to wash your car, either use a commercial car wash or direct the wash water to a grassy area where it can infiltrate into the ground without running into storm drains or roadside ditches.
- 6) Keep your catch basins clear. Catch basins are the underground boxes beneath the grates that you see on streets and in some parking lots. These boxes allow some of the sediment and pollutants to settle out of the stormwater. Catch basins require maintenance; if you keep material from accumulating on the grate, it will help keep the catch basin clear.
- 7) Maintain your car. Our notoriously drippy island cars have created some impressive staining in frequently used parking areas. Much of this residue eventually makes its way into the harbor.
- 8) Try not to use fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. The chemical residue from these products can wash into the harbor with stormwater. Never use these products if rain is in the forecast.
- 9) Pick up after pets. Bacteria and pathogens from pet waste will wash into the harbor along with stormwater.
- 10) Deposit cigarette butts and other trash into the proper receptacles.
- 11) Plant vegetation or find another way to cover up exposed soil. Soil and sediment that is exposed can erode and wash into the harbor. Suspended sediments in stormwater can both impair marine animals directly and help to carry hydrocarbons, metals and other pollutants into our harbor.

Notice: If your Community Group or Church intends to hold a car wash fundraiser, please contact the Town to borrow our Electric Drain Filter that removes detergents