

# Resources

- **City of Steamboat Springs Public Works**  
970-879-2060 [www.steamboatsprings.net](http://www.steamboatsprings.net)
- **City of Steamboat Springs Transportation**  
970-879-3717 [www.steamboatsprings.net](http://www.steamboatsprings.net)
- **City of Steamboat Springs**  
Christmas Tree Recycling  
970-879-2060
- **Routt County**  
Department of Environmental Health  
970-870-0185
- **Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment: Water Quality Control Division**  
303-692-3500 [www.cdph.state.co.us](http://www.cdph.state.co.us)
- **Yampa Valley Recycles**  
970-870-7575 [www.yampavalleyrecycles.org](http://www.yampavalleyrecycles.org)
- Household Hazardous Waste Collection Drive by **Curbside Inc.**  
1-800-HHW-PKUP (1-800-449-7587)
- **Routt County & Steamboat Springs Community Information Center**  
[www.yampavalley.info](http://www.yampavalley.info)
- **Waste Management**  
970-879-2400 [www.wm.com](http://www.wm.com)
- **CSU Extension Agency**  
970-879-0825 [www.ext.colostate.edu](http://www.ext.colostate.edu)
- **United States Environmental Protection Agency**  
[www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater](http://www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater)
- **United States Army Corps of Engineers**  
970-243-1199 [www.spk.usace.army.mil/regulatory.html](http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/regulatory.html)

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**City of Steamboat Springs**

Photos by Jim Steinberg

# Storm Water Quality

Our Waterways  
Need Your Help!

City of  
**Steamboat Springs**

**yampatika**  
The Natural & Cultural Connection

# Storm Drain Pollution

*What is it?*

Storm drains, catch basins, pipes, and open ditch systems are found throughout our community, usually at street curbside, often at corners. They drain runoff from the streets to prevent flooding and erosion, and the water travels to a waterway, untreated. As the water flows off roofs, sidewalks, driveways and streets, intentional and unintentional pollutants such as oil, antifreeze, pet waste, lawn and garden chemicals, and organic materials are picked up. All of this is dumped untreated in the waterways. Here are some examples of typical storm drain pollutants:

- **Sediment** from erosion and construction.
- **Bacterial** from animal waste and sewer overflows.
- **Nutrients** (mainly nitrogen and phosphorous) from fertilizers.
- **Metals** (copper, lead, zinc) from vehicle brakes and parts.
- **Oil and grease** from leaks and spills from vehicles, restaurants, and waste oil dumping.
- **Organic compounds** (soaps, cleaners, solvents, etc.) from dumping of these chemicals into the gutter or storm drain during car washing or other cleaning projects.
- **Pesticides** (fungicides, herbicides, rodenticides, and insecticides) from, residential or commercial pest control activities.
- **Gross pollutants** (trash, debris, leaves, and yard waste)
- **Paint**

# Why Should I Care?

Residues and pollutants on roads and other surfaces soon find their way into some form of drainage system after rain water or snowmelt sends them rushing down into waterways. These residues do not go through a sewage processing plant; they directly enter rivers, streams and other waterways. The major waterways in the Yampa Valley include:

- Yampa River
- Fish Creek
- Spring Creek
- Butcherknife Creek
- Soda Creek
- Walton Creek
- Burgess Creek
- Elk River

Polluted storm water has many adverse effects on plants, wildlife, fish, and people using these waterways.

- Sediment destroy aquatic habitat and cloud the water. They can also affect water temperature.
- Excess nutrients from fertilizers and pet and livestock waste can cause algae blooms. As these high quantities of algae die, they fall to the bottom and, upon decomposition, remove oxygen from the water. Just like us, most aquatic organisms need oxygen to survive.
- Bacteria and pathogens from pet waste are a health hazard.
- Large debris such as plastic bags and cigarette butts can choke, suffocate, or disable aquatic life. Humans can become sick after eating fish caught that have ingested polluted water.
- This is our drinking water, as well as water for thousands of people and animal downstream.

# YOU Can Make A Difference

## Scoop the Poop!

According to the Steamboat Springs Animal Shelter, Routt County has around 10,000 dogs. These dogs create 1,825 tons of waste a year! Your children and pets are exposed to diseases and parasites when pet waste is left on the ground. The waste is also washed into waterways where wildlife and people using the river are exposed. Pick up after your pet and either flush it down the toilet (best option) or seal the bag and dispose of it in the trash.

## Other Ways to Reduce Pollution!

- Prevent erosion from your property by mulching or covering exposed soil with plants.
- Use fertilizers sparingly, and opt for organic fertilizers.
- Use environmentally friendly gardening techniques (such as Integrated Pest Management) and products.
- Clean up leaves and yard waste and compost them, or give them to someone who can.
- Drive less, carpool, and keep your car well maintained.
- Use the free bus service, ride your bike, or walk.
- Fix any oil leaks quickly, clean up spills with absorbent; never hose down a spill. Do not put grease or oil in storm drains or sewer system (sinks or toilets). Recycle motor oil!
- Wash your car at a car wash. (They should recycle their water. Ask them.) Or wash over a landscaped area. Minimize the amount of soap you use.
- Dispose of hazardous waste at a hazardous waste facility.
- Put trash or litter in its place!