

Littering contaminates the environment and our water

Wind and weather, traffic, and animals move litter into gutters, lawns and landscaped areas, alleyways, and parking structures. Debris may be carried by storm drains into local waterways, with potential for serious contamination of the Earth's water supply.



Who litters?

Motorists and pedestrians are the biggest contributors to litter. Individuals under 30 are more likely to litter than those who are older. Choosing to litter means litter on the ground. One in five people in public spaces litter, while the rest dispose of litter properly.

Littering creates more litter

Individuals are much more likely to litter into a littered environment. And once there, it attracts more litter.

A clean community discourages littering and improves overall community quality of life. Availability of trash and recycling receptacles also impacts whether someone chooses to litter.



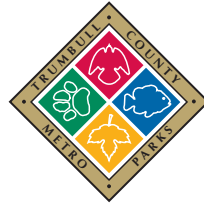
Choose not to litter!

What you can do to prevent litter

Changing a common behavior, like littering, starts with you. Each person must accept responsibility for their actions and influence the actions of others around them at home, at school and in the community at large. Start with these actions:

- Choose not to litter.
- Remind others not to litter.
- Volunteer in your community to help prevent and clean up litter.

For more information, contact:



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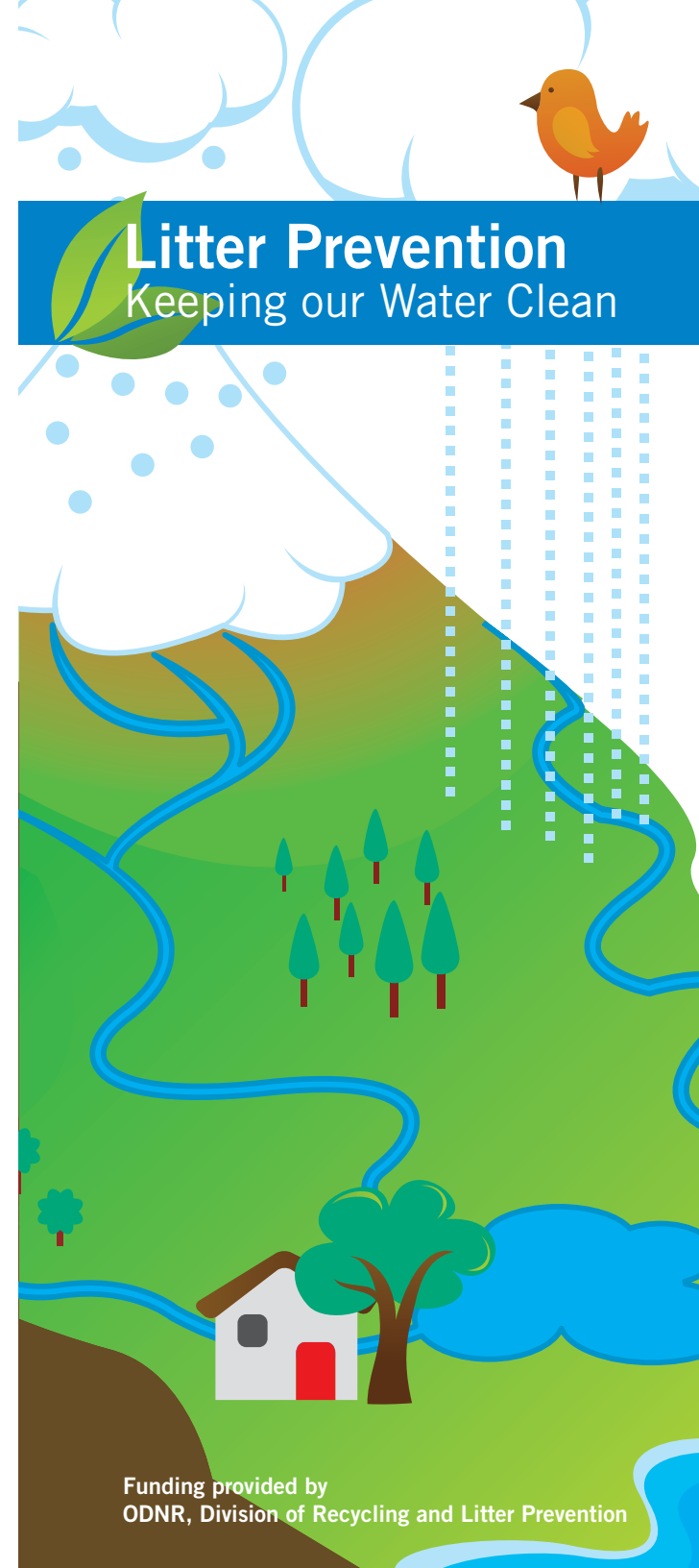
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Litter Prevention
Keeping our Water Clean

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ODNR, Division of Recycling and Litter Prevention

The Earth's Water

Take a good long look at a glass of water. Can you guess how old the water is?

The water may have fallen from the sky as rain last week, but the water has been around pretty much as long as the Earth has!

The Earth has limited amount of water. That water keeps going around and around in what we call the water cycle.

Your backyard stream plays an important part in keeping the water cycle going, **so keep it clean!**

The Water Cycle

The water cycle is made up of a few main parts that you can see on the graphic below:

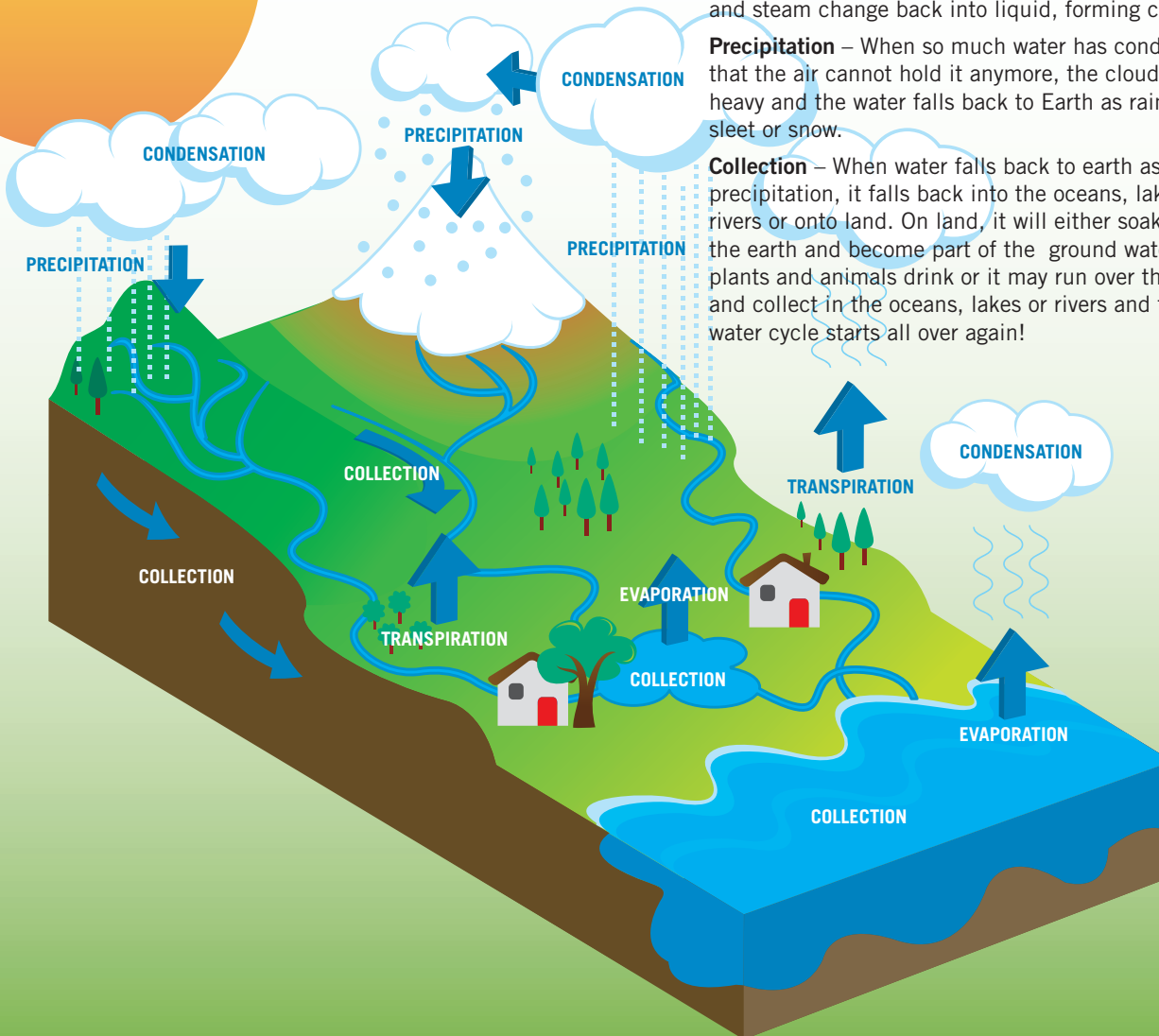
Evaporation – The sun heats up water in rivers or lakes and turns it into vapor or steam. The water vapor or steam leaves the river, lake or ocean and goes into the air.

Transpiration – Plants lose water out of their leaves. Transpiration gives evaporation a bit of a hand in getting the water vapor back up into the air.

Condensation – When the air gets cold, water vapor and steam change back into liquid, forming clouds.

Precipitation – When so much water has condensed that the air cannot hold it anymore, the clouds get heavy and the water falls back to Earth as rain, hail, sleet or snow.

Collection – When water falls back to earth as precipitation, it falls back into the oceans, lakes, or rivers or onto land. On land, it will either soak into the earth and become part of the groundwater that plants and animals drink or it may run over the soil and collect in the oceans, lakes or rivers and the water cycle starts all over again!



Keep backyard streams clean

Grass clippings can be harmful to streams

Most people wouldn't think of dumping garbage into their stream. But did you know that grass clippings, leaves and twigs can be harmful to the stream, too?

These materials decompose and use up most of the oxygen in the stream. This causes the stream to become filled with unwanted algae. The stream will look dirty and release an unpleasant odor.

Keep your backyard stream area clean

A few simple tips can keep your stream in shape. If you don't have a backyard stream, don't worry, these tips can help everybody keep our local streams, rivers and lakes clean by preventing pollution:

Composting

Composting is a great way to turn leaves, grass clippings and kitchen scraps into a soil booster. Remember, don't compost near the stream.

Fertilizer and Pesticide Application

Follow the directions and do not apply fertilizers or pesticides when rain is in the forecast. Rain will cause most of the chemicals to wash off into our local waterways – affecting water quality and wasting money. The excess nutrients in the fertilizers can pollute water by creating blooms of algae, which die and take up a lot of oxygen in the decomposition process. The fish and insects (stream bugs) that live in the stream are not able to survive.



Get a Goat

Just kidding! Don't mow right next to the stream so that an area of vegetation remains to filter pollutants (like salt, oil, sediment, etc.) so they do not get into the stream.

Grass is a great fertilizer for itself, so when you mow, "cut it high and let it lie." The clippings will break down quickly and fertilize the lawn.

