

When your car's leaking oil on the street,
remember it's not just leaking oil on the street.



Leaking oil and other automotive fluids go from your car to the street. These pollutants are then washed into the stormdrain and into our creeks, rivers and ultimately the Great Lakes. This pollutes our sources of water for drinking. Now imagine the number of cars in your area and you can imagine the amount of oil that finds its way from leaky gaskets into our water. So please, keep your car in good repair, properly dispose of waste automotive fluids and protect our precious water supply.

Clean water makes Great Lakes!

www.cleanlakes.ca

Clean water is important to all of us

It's up to all of us to make it happen. In recent years, sources of water pollution like industrial wastes from factories have been reduced. Now, a major percentage of water pollution comes from things like cars leaking oil and other engine fluids, excessive use of fertilizers, waste chemicals like paints and solvents, and failing septic tanks. All of these sources add up to a big pollution problem. But each of us can do small things to help clean up our water too. And that adds up to a pollution solution!

Why do we need clean water?

Having clean water is of primary importance for our health and economy. Clean water provides drinking water, fish habitat, recreation, commercial opportunities, and adds beauty to our landscape. All of us benefit from clean water. And all of us play a role in getting and keeping our creeks, rivers, lakes and groundwater clean.

What's the problem with motor oil?

Oil is toxic and does not dissolve in water. It lasts a long time and sticks to everything from beach sand to bird feathers. Oil and other engine fluids that leak from our cars onto roads and driveways are washed into stormdrains, and then usually flow directly to a stream or lake. Oil and other automotive fluids like antifreeze and transmission fluid are poisonous to people, wildlife and plants. One litre of oil can make a slick larger than a football field! Used motor oil is the largest single source of oil pollution in our creeks, rivers and lakes. Canadians spill 4 million litres of used oil each year into our waters. One drop of oil can pollute 25 litres of water! Need we say more? You can put a stop to this needless source of pollution and contamination.

How can you use and change your motor oil and help keep our waters clean?

- Never dispose of oil or other engine fluids down the stormdrain, on the ground or into a ditch.
- Stop drips. Check for oil and other fluid leaks regularly and fix them promptly.
- Keep your car tuned to reduce oil use.
- Use oil absorbents or drip pans beneath your vehicle if you have leaks or are doing engine work. Clean up spills immediately. Collect all used oil and other waste engine fluids in containers with tight fitting lids for disposal. Do not mix different engine fluids. Recycle used motor oil. Many auto supply stores and gas stations will accept used oil.
- Buy recycled (re-refined) motor oil to use in your car.
- Reduce your driving, share rides, use the bus, bike or walk more often.

Where to dispose

Take used oil and other residential hazardous waste to your local hazardous waste depot or to an auto garage that uses proper disposal methods. To find out more and what you can do to prevent water pollution, contact your local municipality or conservation authority.

Partners for clean water:



Images courtesy of the Puget Sound Action Team, Washington State Department of Ecology in partnership with King County and the cities of Bellevue, Seattle, and Tacoma, Washington

For information on the use of these posters contact
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