

Remember, You're Not Just Maintaining Your Car

Did you know that just four quarts of oil could form an eight-acre oil slick if spilled or dumped down a storm drain? With over four million vehicles in Southeast Michigan, we all need to practice good car care to protect our lakes and streams.

How does caring for your car affect our waterways? Storm drains found in our streets and yards and roadside ditches lead directly to our lakes and streams. So, if motor oil and other fluids are dumped or washed into the storm drain, they pollute our local waterways.

What can you do? Simple.

- **Maintain it.** Keep your vehicle properly tuned and use the owner's manual to guide decisions about how often it is necessary to change fluids such as oil and antifreeze.
- **Take advantage of business expertise.** Consider taking your vehicle to the shop to have the oil and other fluids changed. These businesses have the ability to recycle the used materials and clean up accidental spills.
- **Recycle.** If you choose to change your oil and other fluids yourself, label the waste containers. Then, take them to your community's household hazardous waste collection day or to a business that accepts used oil. Never dump used oil, antifreeze, or other fluids on the ground or down the storm drain.
- **Soak it up.** Use kitty litter promptly to absorb small amounts of spilled vehicle fluids. Then sweep it into a bag and throw it in the trash. Don't leave these spills or wash them off pavement. They'll be flushed into the storm drains.
- **Do it under cover.** Whenever possible, perform vehicle maintenance in a well ventilated, but covered location (e.g., garage). This minimizes the potential for rainfall to wash those inevitable spills and drips into our lakes and streams.

For more easy steps on protecting our lakes and streams, visit www.semcog.org.

Remember, our water is our future — and it's ours to protect!