

# What is a Watershed?

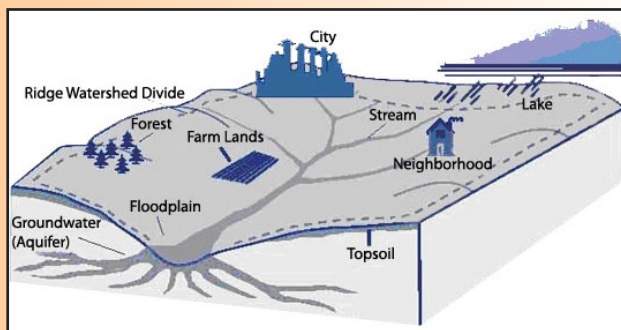
A watershed is an area of land that drains to a common point, such as a nearby creek, stream, river or lake. Every small watershed drains to a larger watershed that eventually flows to the ocean.

Watersheds support a wide variety of plants and wildlife and provide many outdoor recreation opportunities. By protecting the health of our watershed we can preserve and enhance the quality of life for the residents of Somerset.

## What is Stormwater Runoff?

Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow and is located within a watershed. It flows from rooftops, over paved streets, sidewalks and parking lots, across bare soil, and through lawns and storm drains. As it flows, runoff collects and transports soil, pet waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizer, oil and grease, litter and other pollutants, which drains directly into our streams.

Polluted stormwater contaminates streams, rivers and lakes. It can kill or damage plants, fish, and wildlife, while degrading the quality of our water.



## Useful Links:

Environmental Protection Agency

- [cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/index.cfm](http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/index.cfm)
- [cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menuofbmps/index.cfm?action=min\\_measure&min\\_measure\\_id=4](http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menuofbmps/index.cfm?action=min_measure&min_measure_id=4)

Kentucky Stormwater Association

- [www.kystormwater.org](http://www.kystormwater.org)

Upper Cumberland Watershed Watch

- [www.uppercumberlandriver.org](http://www.uppercumberlandriver.org)

## For More Information:

### Somerset Utilities

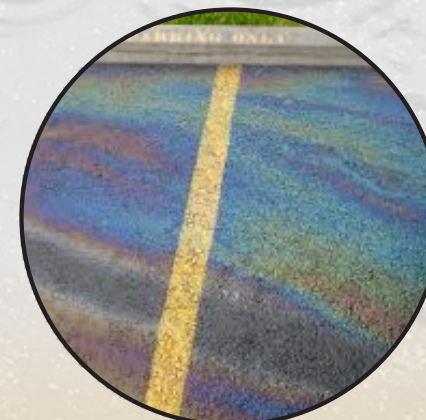
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Kentucky Division of Water

# Oil and Water Don't Mix

Clean Water



Healthy Life

SOMERSET, KY

# Facts About Used Oil

Used motor oil never wears out—it just gets dirty and can be recycled, cleaned and used again. Motor oil poured onto the ground or into storm drains, or tossed into trash cans (even in sealed containers) can contaminate and pollute the soil, groundwater, streams, and rivers.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that over 200 million gallons of used oil ends up in the trash, in water resources and poured on the ground each year.

Recycling used oil helps protect ground and surface water, fish, wildlife, conserves energy, and reduces the threat of pollution. If recycled, the oil could conserve nearly 500,000 barrels of crude oil each year, worth nearly \$10 million dollars.

Used oil from ATVs, jet skis, boats, lawn mowers, weed eaters, and other motorized items threatens the environment just as much as oil from automobiles.

Used motor oil cannot be collected for recycling if it has been mixed with other automotive fluids.

# What's the Problem?

Used motor oil can contain concentrations of toxic heavy metals such as zinc, lead, and cadmium that affect the environment including wildlife, vegetation, surface water and drinking water supplies when not disposed of properly.

One quart of oil poured down a storm drain can contaminate one million gallons of water. Water that enters a storm drain is not treated at a treatment plant before entering our streams.

One pint of oil can produce an oil slick that covers approximately one acre of water. An oil slick is harmful to the environment because it covers the surface of the water and blocks out sunlight that plants and other organisms need to live.

Other automotive fluids, including anti-freeze, solvents and gasoline are also harmful to the environment when not disposed of properly.



# What Can You Do?

There are things that every citizen can do at home and in his or her community to help prevent illegal dumping of oil and pollution of our water supply:

- Recycling used motor oil at a local used oil collection center. (AutoZone, 1780 South Highway 27, Somerset, KY, T: 606-678-2299).
- Request re-refined motor oil when you get your oil changed. Re-refined motor oil must meet the same American Petroleum Institute (API) certification standards as virgin motor oil.
- Cars that leak oil and other automotive fluids are a big source of water pollution. Have your car checked for any leaking fluids that might run-off into storm drains.
- Recycle and reuse oil filters. Recycling one ton of drained oil filters produces 1,700 pounds of steel and recovers about 60 gallons of used oil.
- Community storm drain stenciling events are a good way to get the word out about what should and should not enter storm drains. Many programs focus on the dangers of mixing oil and water.
- If you change your own oil, use a reusable oil container. Drain the oil carefully into the container, avoiding splatter and spills.