

## Point Source and Non-Point Source Pollution.....

### *What's the Difference?*

Point Source Pollution is water pollution that typically comes from wastewater discharge pipes at factories, power plants and sewage treatment plants. Point Source Pollution is regulated by state and federal laws and agencies. Non-Point Source Pollution (NPS) is water pollution that comes from many different sources—like roads, highways, sidewalks, parking lots, lawns, gardens, farm fields and leaking septic systems. NPS is triggered when rainwater washes road salts, vehicle fluids, fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides, manure, litter and soil off the land and into waterways. As surface runoff moves over land, it picks up and moves these pollutants into our streams, rivers, lakes and wetlands—and even into our reservoirs and groundwater drinking supplies. ***NPS is the biggest source of pollution to our streams and rivers.***

Because there are so many sources of NPS, it's difficult to regulate. Therefore, it's up to each of us to do our part to keep our water clean for our use, as well as for the plants and animals that also depend on water for their survival. Drinking water, whether from private wells or municipal water supplies, comes from the rain that falls on our watersheds. What happens to this rainwater from the time it hits the ground to the time it's poured into a glass, is mostly up to each of us as individuals. We all contribute to Non-Point Source Pollution in our daily lives. But there are ways we can make changes to reduce our impacts to our water resources, and minimize our contributions to Non-Point Source Pollution.

Consider adopting a 30-day trial of “green” habits that will help protect our water. Select some habits from this list. You'll find that in addition to protecting our water, they also save you time and money.

#### Inside your home

1. Avoid using your garbage disposal. It adds potentially damaging grease and solids to your plumbing and septic system. Instead, make or buy a compost bin to dispose of food scraps and let nature recycle it into soil for you (West Earl Township is holding a free home composting workshop on May 11, 2018. Call 717-859-3201 to register).
2. Avoid using chemical-based cleaning products. They can kill essential bacteria in your septic system and are difficult to remove in wastewater treatment plants. Instead, consider using chemical-free products for house cleaning.
3. Buy laundry and dishwashing detergents that are phosphorous-free. Phosphorous is a nutrient that can cause excessive algae blooms that suck oxygen out of the water and cause toxins to be released into streams and lakes, putting fish at risk.
4. Reduce the amount of water you use. No need to keep the spigot running the whole time you're washing your fruits and vegetables, or brushing your teeth.

#### Outside your home

1. Avoid using fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides on your lawn. Instead, leave grass clippings on your lawn to allow nutrients to cycle into the soil
2. Harvest rainwater using rain barrels and rain gardens for watering plants. You can visit the Township's website at [www.westearltwp.org](http://www.westearltwp.org) and click on the MS4 link for more information about rain barrels.
3. Plant native trees, shrubs and wildflowers. The roots of plants absorb and remove pollutants from water and bind soil together to keep it from washing off the land when it rains.