

Clean Water Starts at Home

Pump It Out.

Have your septic tank pumped out and system inspected every 3 to 5 years by a licensed septic contractor. Keep a record of pumping, inspections, and maintenance.

The Town of Westport has a Septic System Maintenance regulation that requires residents to do this.



Pick Up the Poop.

Pet waste doesn't just decompose. It adds harmful bacteria and nutrients to local waters when it's not disposed of properly. It's best to dispose of the waste in the garbage.



Lawn chemicals.

Avoid fertilizer and pesticide use on lawns. Instead, take an organic approach to lawn care, or a least a less toxic approach where pesticides are avoided and diversity in what grows in your lawn is encouraged.



Go Chemical Free!

Minimize the use of pesticides and herbicides in your yard.



Use Rainbarrels.

Stormwater runoff contributes to stream pollution and habitat destruction, and costs the the Town money. By properly self-managing stormwater on your property, you help to mimic nature and reduce stormwater's damaging effects.



Cut it High... Let it Lie.

Try to keep your lawn at least 3" in height to minimize weed growth, reduce the need for watering, and decrease the likelihood of pests. Leaving the clippings on the lawn can also help block weeds and retain moisture.



Remember: Only rain belongs in the drain!

Don't dump anything down storm drains. Be sure to clear away leaves and debris.



Keep your car well-maintained.

Fix any fluid leaks promptly and make sure to clean up any spills.



Wash your car over your lawn or field.

This allows the ground to neutralize the soap and grime from your car rather than sending it directly to our streams. Use biodegradable or non-toxic soap that is phosphate-free. You can also take your car to a commercial car wash where wastewater is either recycled or treated.



Join WRWA

Help Support Clean Water

- ___ \$50 Friend of the watershed
- ___ \$100 Contributor to the watershed
- ___ \$250 Steward of the watershed
- ___ \$500 Guardian of the watershed
- ___ \$1000 Benefactor of the watershed
- ___ \$___ Surprise Us!

Name _____
 Mailing address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____
 e-mail _____



Please make checks payable to **WRWA**. All membership contributions are 100% tax-deductible.

Mail to:
Westport River Watershed Alliance
 P.O. Box 3427
 Westport, Massachusetts 02790-0703

Charge your membership:
 Mastercard/Visa/Discover/ (please circle)

Amount to charge: _____
 Name on card: _____
 Card number: _____
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 Security Code*: _____

* last 3 digits back of card
 Billing Address if different from above:



Westport River Watershed Alliance
 PO BOX 3427
 Westport, MA 02790

Postal Customer



The [Westport River Watershed Alliance](#) is dedicated to raising awareness about nature protection and clean water for drinking, swimming, fishing, and fun. We encourage actions that prevent pollution and protect nature. One problem is the word “development” usually means adding concrete and other hard or impervious surfaces. Sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, change the natural path rainwater takes upon contact with the earth. Instead of soaking into the ground, rainwater is “runoff” on the hard surfaces. As more and more natural space is converted into developed area, the runoff increases. This increased runoff creates a greater volume of stormwater pollution to our local waterbodies.

YOU CAN HELP—

Right now by doing a few things at home. Pollutants that get into stormwater because of our daily choices and activities can end up in our drinking water, streams, and the river. You may be polluting water without realizing it.

The Town of Westport has invested significant time and money to understand the reasons for the long-term decline in water quality and healthy habitat of the Westport River. The conclusion from decades of water testing and many scientific studies is that [the Town needs a watershed based plan to reduce the amount of nitrogen entering the river.](#)

We have learned that our homes, businesses and farms are the main sources of too much nitrogen. This has been confirmed by the Massachusetts Estuary Program (MEP) Report (2013), Bread and Cheese Brook Report (2014), and the Final Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Report (2017). [The TMDL Report sets targets on the limits of nitrogen the river can receive to restore it to a healthy and productive estuary.](#)

Reducing the long term effects of septic systems and cesspools to surface waters and aquifers calls for a watershed approach to planning. Simply put, the current wastewater management systems used in our homes, businesses, and traditional agricultural practices do little to reduce the excessive nitrogen and bacteria entering the river. In more densely populated neighborhoods with smaller lots, septic systems and wells are located so close together that drinking water quality can be compromised. We need a plan that looks beyond current approaches to manage wastewater, and instead identifies where new solutions can be most effectively applied to respond to a watershed-wide problem.

Departing from the “business as usual” approach always presents challenges. Our community does not have the in-house technical, engineering and financial resources to develop a comprehensive plan that will provide the guidance needed to move forward. Recognizing that constraint, the [Town has applied for a targeted, integrated wastewater management planning loan from the State Revolving Fund](#) in the amount of \$150,000. If the application is approved, a commitment to accept the loan would be decided at Town Meeting next spring.

Building from the prior studies and reports, the plan will describe and evaluate a mix of traditional and alternative technologies and practices that can be applied to halt and reverse the current nitrogen and bacteria loading that has degraded the river. The plan will also examine alternatives for an additional water supply and wastewater infrastructure necessary to:

- Address public health concerns on properties with compromised drinking water sources and,
- Reduce current nitrogen loading and prevent additional loads that would arise from future residential and commercial development.

The plan will evaluate the most promising combination of methods for wastewater and stormwater treatment as well as other practices to reduce nitrogen generation and discharge. It will recommend which approaches will be most efficient and cost effective in achieving the reduction targets considering the type, volume and location of the sources of contamination. The components of the plan will include needs, alternatives, and financial analyses, a preliminary engineering design, and a public engagement process to obtain the community’s input and participation in the design and implementation of the plan.



Westport River Watershed Alliance
 (WRWA) **WRWA’s mission:**
 To restore, protect, celebrate and sustain the natural resources of the Westport River and its watershed