

# Sources of Water Pollution

## Point Source Pollution

When asked to picture pollution entering rivers and lakes, most people think of discharge pipes from factories spewing foul-smelling chemicals into the water. Factory discharge pipes are known as point sources of pollution because they come from a single source. Point sources threaten water quality and are subject to federal regulation under the Clean Water Act. Because they are easy to identify, many point sources have been cleaned up in recent decades.



### Point Sources

A point source is a single source of a contaminant you can pinpoint its location on a map, for example, a sewerage pipe, a chimney or a leaking oil tank.

Below is LSPA's enviroscape model that LSPA's staff uses in local classrooms and on Love Your Lake Day to demonstrate Non-Point Source Pollution.



**Lake Sunapee Protective Association**  
63 Main Street, PO Box 683  
Sunapee, NH 03782  
Phone: 603.763.2210  
Fax: 603.763.2077  
Email: [lspa@lakesunapee.org](mailto:lspa@lakesunapee.org)  
Website: [www.lakesunapee.org](http://www.lakesunapee.org)

# Non-Point Source Pollution

## from Fertilizer, Pesticides and Other Household Chemicals



# LSPA

*Devoted to the Environmental Quality  
of the Lake Sunapee Watershed*

**Non-Point Source Pollution** - The greatest threat to water quality today, responsible for more than half of all surface water pollution problems, is non-point source pollution. This type of pollution does not have an easily identifiable source but comes from a variety of sources and is made up of variety of pollutants. Some pollutants are: pesticides, fertilizers, metals, road salt, and motor oil. We all contribute to non-point pollution by using fertilizer on our lawns, walking our pets, washing our cars etc.

## Household Chemicals

Many chemicals commonly used around the house are toxic:

- ◆ Use low phosphate or water based detergents when ever possible.
- ◆ Do not pour unwanted household chemicals down the drain - take them to hazardous waste collections.
- ◆ Choose safe cleaning alternatives such as vinegar and water.

## Storm Management

Rain water quickly travels into our waterways through storm drains or by flowing directly from the land. To prevent polluted stormwater from entering our streams, lakes and ponds please follow these suggestions:

- ◆ Keep vehicles tuned up and repair leaks - better yet carpool, walk, or bike short distances.
- ◆ Keep pesticides, oil, leaves, and other pollutants off streets and out of storm drains.
- ◆ Clean up pet wastes - bury or flush down the toilet.



## Septic Systems

Improperly maintained septic systems can contaminate ground water and surface water with nutrients and pathogens. By following the recommendations below, you can help ensure that your system continues to function properly.

- ◆ Inspect your septic system annually.
- ◆ Pump out your septic system regularly (pumping every 3-5 years is recommended for a three bedroom house with a 1,000 gallon tank).
- ◆ Do not divert storm drains or basement pumps into septic systems.
- ◆ Sump pump discharges should be directed into grass and gravel to filter into the ground.
- ◆ Avoid or reduce the use of your garbage disposal - it contributes unnecessary solids to your septic system and can increase the frequency of needed pumping.
- ◆ Don't use toilet as trash cans! Excess solids may clog your drain field and require more frequent pumping.

## Landscaping and Gardening

What you decide to plant and how you choose to maintain your property can have a definite impact on water quality.

Some helpful landscaping tips include:

- ◆ When landscaping your yard, select plants that have low requirements for water, fertilizers and pesticides.
- ◆ Preserve existing trees and plant additional trees and shrubs to help prevent erosion and promote infiltration of water into the soil.
- ◆ Leave lawn clippings on your lawn so that nutrients in the clippings are recycled.



- ◆ Install wood decking, bricks, or interlocking stones instead of impervious cement walk ways.
- ◆ Spread mulch on bare ground to prevent erosion and runoff.
- ◆ Direct downspout flows and other runoff to rain gardens, rain barrels, or a gravel or lawn area where the water can settle into the soil.