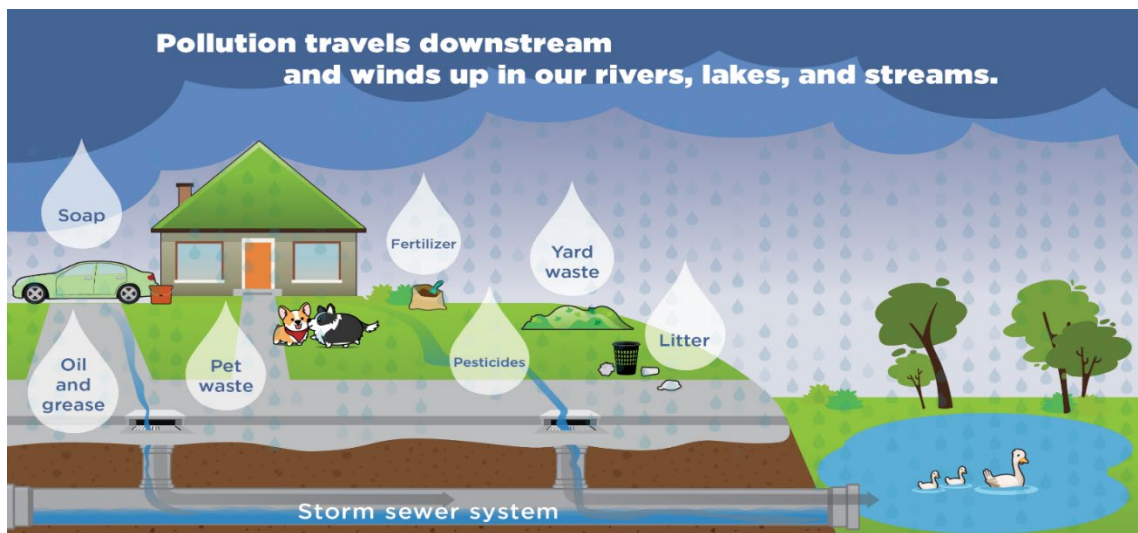


Stormwater and Best Management Practices at Patrick Space Force Base

Do you love rain? There are so many positives such as the sound of rain hitting pavement, splashing in puddles as kids, our lawns and plants being watered, that post rain shower smell that even candle companies can't get right, and of course spotting that elusive rainbow.

However, while rain showers can be wonderful, they can also cause erosion, flooding, and stormwater runoff. Most pollution in water originates on land with much of it coming from polluted stormwater runoff. Every time it rains the water picks up toxic substances from rooftops, roads, construction sites, lawns, trash, and more. This pollution is not treated or removed from stormwater as it is carried through drains out to the rivers, streams, and lakes (as depicted in the figure below) potentially making them toxic and unsafe for people and animals.



Here at Patrick Space Force Base (PSFB) the stormwater is discharged into the Banana River Lagoon (BRL) which spans the entire western shoreline of PSFB. The BRL is home to many fish, plants, and other animals and is an integral part of life here on the Space Coast.

One of the ways the personnel at PSFB take action to keep stormwater healthy is by maintaining compliance with the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System which is permitted under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System program. These permits and systems are in place to improve our Nation's waterways by reducing pollutants transported by stormwater into the stormwater drainage systems.

A tool to protect the storm sewer system is called a Best Management Practice (BMP). BMPs can be as big as a street sweeper or as small as a broom with a dustpan. All BMPs are useful, helpful, and make a difference. The list below includes just a few BMPs that we can all implement to reduce stormwater pollution and keep the BRL looking and feeling great. The PSFB Environmental Office encourages you to think of some additional ones!

- Scoop the poop and carry pet waste bags to clean up after your pets.
- Install a rain sensor or turn off your sprinklers when there is rain in the forecast.
- Routinely test your sprinkler system to replace any broken, defective, or missing sprinklers.
- Avoid overwatering and follow the St. Johns River Water Management District watering restrictions (i.e., <https://www.sjrwmd.com/wateringrestrictions/>).
- Only wash your car at a commercial or designated area. Commercial car washes drain to a specific water treatment system that removes pollutants from the water.
- Don't perform car/equipment maintenance in parking lots or areas near storm drains and ensure you properly dispose of engine fluids.
- Clean spills up immediately and keep adequate spill cleanup supplies. In the event of a fluid spill, having the proper cleanup kit close by can make a huge difference. Make sure you know how to use them!
- Throw your trash in the garbage and keep your trash cans/dumpsters closed.

Another way you can help protect and improve our lagoon is to get involved! Below is a list of the local volunteering and workshop opportunities:

- Space Force Earth Day Event (April 25, 2025 – contact Steven Baker, (321) 494-9387, steven.baker.44@spaceforce.mil to get involved!)
- Lagoon Loyal – <https://lagoonloyal.com/actions/attend-a-lagoon-event/>
- Marine Resources Council – <https://lovetheirl.org/>
- Brevard Zoo Living Shoreline – <https://restoreourshores.org/get-involved/volunteer-we-need-you/>
- Keep Brevard Beautiful – <https://keepbrevardbeautiful.org/get-active/volunteer>

Last but not least....See Something, Say Something

If you think something has been dumped or is being discharged (illicit discharge) into a storm drain or a waterbody, call the PSFB Stormwater Program Manager at (321) 494-9387. The signs of illicit discharge include suds, foul or chemical odor, discoloration of water, oily rainbow sheen, and trash/debris.

