

# Clean Water And A Clean Hudson River Are Important To All Of Us

It's up to all of us to make it happen. In recent years "point" sources of water pollution like industrial wastes from factories have been greatly reduced. Now, more than 60 percent of water pollution comes from diffuse or "non-point sources" like cars leaking oil, fertilizers from farms and lawns, and failing septic tanks. All these sources add up to a big pollution problem. But each of us can do small things to help clean up our water too- and that adds up to a pollution solution!

## Why do we need clean water?

Having clean water is of primary importance for our health, environment and economy. Clean water provides recreation, commercial opportunities, fish habitat, drinking water and adds beauty to our landscape. All of us benefit from clean water—and all of us have a role in getting and keeping our groundwater, lakes, streams and Hudson River clean.

## What's the problem with motor oil?

Oil does not dissolve in water. It lasts a long time and sticks to everything from beach sand to bird feathers. Oil and other petroleum products are toxic to people, wildlife and plants. One pint of oil can make a slick larger than a football field.

Oil that leaks from our cars onto roads and driveways is washed into storm drains, and then usually flows directly to a lake or stream without being treated first. Used motor oil is the largest single source of oil pollution in our lakes, streams and rivers. Americans spill 180 million gallons of used oil each year into our waters. This is 16 times the amount spilled by the Exxon Valdez in Alaska.

## Clean Water Tip:

How can you use and change your motor oil and help keep our waters clean?

- Stop drips. Check for oil leaks regularly and fix them promptly. Keep your vehicle tuned to reduce oil use.
- Use ground cloths or drip pans beneath your vehicle if you have leaks or are doing engine work. Clean up spills immediately and properly dispose of cleanup materials.
- Do not mix oil with gasoline, solvents or other engine fluids. This contaminates oil which could otherwise be recycled, increases the volume of waste and may form a more hazardous material.
- Never dispose of oil or other engine fluids down the storm drain, on the ground or into a ditch.
- Recycle used motor oil. Many auto supply stores and gas stations will accept used oil. Recycling just one gallon of used oil can generate enough electricity to run the average household for almost 24 hours.
- Buy recycled (re-refined) motor oil to use in your car.

To find out more about where you can take used oil for recycling, call your local Soil and Water Conservation District, or visit the Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation Districts website at [www.lhccd.org](http://www.lhccd.org)



This information is brought to you by the Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation Districts. Established in 1998, the members have been working with individuals to coordinate state and federal conservation programs at a local level. The Districts provide technical assistance and education on soil, water, and related natural resources. Municipalities, farmers, and landowners use this information in making proper land use decisions.