

# What's a Watershed?

Think of a watershed like a funnel. If you place a drop of water anywhere in the funnel, it will fall out through the spout. A watershed works much the same way, and it refers to any area of land that drains to a common point. Hills, mountains, and sloping topography separate watersheds and act like the walls of the funnel, while the rivers, streams, and stormwater drains act as the spout that concentrates the water flowing over the land, channeling it elsewhere.

Picture a drop of water falling on a hill, miles from the nearest stream. When the rain falls, some of the water soaks into the soil and some evaporates into the air, while the rest runs off the land. That water joins small streams and wetlands that drain into lakes and rivers, and eventually flows to the ocean. This is how trash, chemicals, or bacteria miles from a body of water can still end up in our rivers and lakes, and it's why we all need to understand how our actions impact local waterways and those downstream!

The urbanized area around Lansing lies within a portion of the Upper Grand River Watershed which can be broken into three smaller watershed areas: the Grand River Watershed (direct drainage), the Looking Glass River Watershed, and the Red Cedar River Watershed. The runoff from this area eventually drains into Lake Michigan at the mouth of the Grand River in Grand Haven, MI. Because of this connection, our actions at home have a direct impact on the health of the Great Lakes!

## **Help Protect Our Water by Following These Tips!**

Always conserve and reuse water wisely.

Soil test before you apply fertilizers. Use low or no-phosphorus fertilizers.

Use native vegetation and reduce turf grass by increasing native wildflowers and grasses.

Capture and reuse rainwater to control stormwater runoff.

Dispose of pet waste properly in the trash or toilet (not onsite septic systems).

Wash your car at a commercial facility or on the lawn instead of your driveway (if allowed by local ordinance).

Maintain all vehicles, eliminating leaks and spills.

Recycle and dispose of household chemicals properly (motor oil, household cleaners, paint, etc.).

Inspect and maintain onsite septic systems and sewers.

Join a local watershed organization!



# GREATER LANSING REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

[www.mywatersheds.org](http://www.mywatersheds.org)

