

This past year we've all worked hard to keep ourselves and others healthy. Now what can we do to keep our **water** healthy? "Stop Pollution Quick, Don't Make the Water Sick" by following these simple tips:

Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle!

- Keep plastic bags, masks, wipes, and latex gloves out of the recycling bin – they are NOT recyclable.
- Single-use plastics and Styrofoam, common with takeout food, have seen a resurgence because of COVID-19; They are not recyclable and end up in the landfill.
- Reduce waste by using products such as reusable masks and coffee cups, and biodegradable takeout containers.

Composting is recycling in its most basic form and is a way to keep our soil and water healthy and clean:

- Composted material is a natural fertilizer, reducing the need for synthetic fertilizers.
- You can compost: grass clippings and other yard waste, food scraps, coffee grounds (not the filter, which may contain plastic), dryer and vacuum lint, shredded newspaper, cardboard, hair and fur, and fireplace ashes.
- NOT compostable: pet waste, meat, dairy products, fats and greases, coal or charcoal ash.

According to the National Park Service (NPS), one pint of motor oil can cover a one-acre pond. Whether you are a recent or long-time **automotive** DIY'er, follow these environmentally friendly tips to keep our water healthy and clean:

- When changing your own oil, prevent drips and spills by using a drip tray.
- Most automotive stores accept for recycling used oil, filters and batteries. Certain locations will even pay you for your old battery!
- Skip the hands-on washing and get your car squeaky clean at a commercial car wash. The water used at these stores is treated before it goes down the drain, reducing potential pollutants.

Never Flush or Pour Unwanted, Unused or Expired **Medications** down the Drain:

- Flushed medications can get into our lakes, rivers and streams. A nationwide study done in the early 2000's by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) found low levels of drugs such as antibiotics, hormones, contraceptives and steroids in 80% of the rivers and streams tested.
- Prescription drugs can be disposed of at a local drug take back event, local prescription drug drop-off box (ex: Plain Township Hall), or as a last resort, thrown out with the trash.
- If a prescription drug drop-off is not available, visit the Food and Drug Administration website for proper disposal methods.

For more ideas on how to keep our water healthy, check out the latest Stormwater brochure:

<https://www.starkcountyohio.gov/storm-water/storm-water/brochures>