

## What are the effects of storm water pollution?

Polluted storm water runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals and people.

- **Sediment** can cloud the water and make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow. Sediment also can destroy aquatic habitats.
- **Excess nutrients** can cause algae blooms. When algae die, they sink to the bottom and decompose in a process that removes oxygen from the water. Fish and other aquatic organisms can't exist in water with low dissolved oxygen levels.
- **Bacteria and other pathogens** can wash into swimming areas and create health hazards, often making beach closures necessary.
- **Debris** - plastic bags, six-pack rings, bottles, and cigarette butts - washed into waterbodies can choke, suffocate, or disable aquatic life like ducks, fish, turtles, and birds.
- **Household hazardous wastes** like insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, used motor oil, and other auto fluids can poison aquatic life. Land animals and people can become sick from eating diseased fish and shellfish or ingesting polluted water

