

### ***What you can do-***

- Recycle used oil. Do not pour it down storm sewers.
- Prevent spills and leaks from being carried into the storm sewer.
- Clean up spills immediately.
- Wash your car using minimal chemicals and biodegradable soaps.
- Consider using a commercial car wash where all water is sent to the sanitary water treatment system.

### **Water Quantity**

Floods have plagued the Papillion Creek Watershed for decades. Minimizing flood damages from these floods safely conveying or reducing the quantity of runoff waters. It also includes wisely managing floodplains to reduce flooding impacts on lives and property. Keeping waterways and floodways free of debris and other obstructions is another important element of proper floodplain management.

### ***What you can do-***

- Participate in cleanup efforts along waterways.
- Keep debris out of streams.
- Don't dump materials such as tree branches or grass clippings in waterways.
- Consult local agencies about floodplain regulations before construction.
- Acquire flood insurance if you live in a floodplain.

- Have an evacuation plan prepared if you live in a floodplain.

### **Home, Community, or Neighborhood Activities**

There are a variety of things that each of us can do in our own communities to improve the conditions of the Papillion Creek.

### ***What you can do-***

- Attend future public meetings on watershed issues.
- Join a neighborhood or community group involved with stenciling of storm drains.
- Organize a stream clean-up day for the neighborhood creek or stream.
- Put in tree/shrub/grass plantings along the neighborhood creek.
- Work together to restore a natural wetland in the neighborhood.
- If soccer or baseball fields are being renovated, restore the area in a dual role such as stormwater retention cells.
- Organize a volunteer stream and water quality monitoring program whereby neighborhood people join together to monitor the stream for debris and water quality.
- Homeowners with septic tanks should check their systems for failure and replace if found to be leaking or performing poorly.
- Owners of campers or mobile homes need to dispose of wastes properly.



## **What Can I Do?**

**The Papillion Creek Watershed Partnership (PCWP) was formed through an inter-local cooperative agreement. Partnership members include:**

Bellevue  
Bennington  
Elkhorn  
Girls and Boys Town  
Gretna  
LaVista  
Omaha  
Papillion  
Ralston  
Douglas County  
Sarpy County  
**Papio-Missouri River NRD**

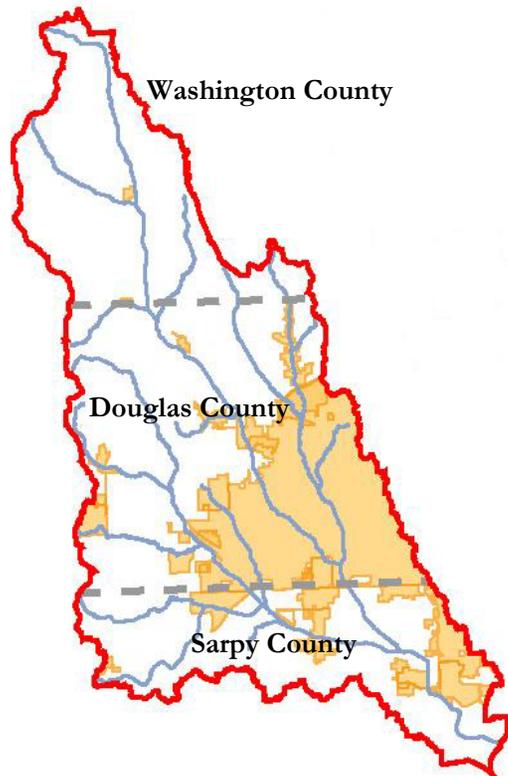
**Papillion Creek Watershed Partnership**  
8901 South 154<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE 68138  
(402) 444-6222

The Papillion Creek is more than just a creek, it is a watershed that reflects the surrounding land use.

*Watershed properties have a direct link to the water quantity and water quality of the Papillion Creek through the stormwater drainage system.*

Human activity within the Papillion Creek watershed directly affects the quality of water within the watershed and downstream. It is important to protect surface water from pollutants and degradation in order to serve wildlife habitat functions and recreational needs.

### The Papillion Creek Watershed



### Facts you should know

A watershed is a geographic area that forms a natural bowl or basin. Within a watershed, the runoff from rainfall, snowmelt, or irrigation drains to storm sewers and into streams, rivers, or lakes.

The Papillion Creek Watershed covers most of Sarpy, Douglas, and Washington Counties and is part of the Missouri River Watershed.

### Erosion & Lawns

Erosion is a main source of pollution into streams and lakes. Excess sediment turns lake water cloudy making it less suitable for recreation, fish, and aquatic plants.

Fertilizers and pesticides are beneficial to plants and lawns when used in proper amounts and at proper times. Excess fertilizer disrupts lake and stream system balance, killing fish and altering habitat.

### What you can do-

- Control erosion and runoff on your property with ground covers and mulch.
- Avoid over-applying water to prevent runoff. Over watering washes away soil, nutrients, and pesticides.
- Apply fertilizers and pesticides according to label directions. Proper timing, rate, and method of application should be followed.
- Sweep fertilizer off pavement and back onto the lawn.
- Leave nitrogen rich grass clippings on the lawn.
- Collect pet waste whether in yards or while on walks.

### Household Pollutants

The discards we produce in and around our homes can affect the quality of water in the watershed's lakes and streams, through runoff into storm sewers.

### What you can do-

- Purchase products in amounts you can use.
- Store hazardous products in their original containers.
- Buy the least toxic products available for the task
- Dispose of leftover paints, antifreeze, motor oil, plastics, chemicals, etc. properly. Do not pour them down the storm sewer.
- Recycle what you can.
- Dispose of pesticides properly.

### Vehicle Maintenance

A variety of toxins and chemicals in the form of gasoline, oil, grease, antifreeze, windshield wiper fluid, transmission and brake fluid can pose a threat to water quality when not used properly.

Regularly scheduled maintenance of engines and parts can prevent spills and leaks onto pavement and streets. Stormwater can carry spilled fluids into gutters and storm sewers and to surface water bodies of the watershed.