

What is a Watershed?



Oil & Water Don't Mix

Used motor oil is the largest single source of oil pollution in our lakes, rivers and streams.

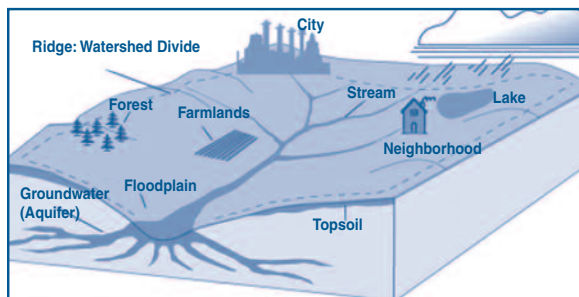


Clean Hood River.
Healthy Life.



A **watershed** is an area of land that drains to a common point, such as a nearby creek, stream, river or lake. Every small watershed drains to a larger watershed that eventually flows to the ocean.

The **Hood River** watershed supports a wide variety of plants, fish and wildlife and offers many outdoor recreation opportunities. By protecting the health of our watershed, we can preserve and enhance the quality of life for Hood River valley residents.



A typical watershed system

What is stormwater runoff?

Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow. It flows from rooftops, over paved streets, sidewalks and parking lots, across bare soil, through lawns and into storm drains. As it flows, runoff collects and transports soil, pet waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizer, oil and grease, litter and other pollutants. This water drains directly into nearby waterways without receiving treatment at sewage plants.

Polluted stormwater contaminates streams, rivers and lakes. It can kill or damage plants, fish and wildlife, while degrading the quality of our water.

For more information, contact:
Hood River Watershed Group
3007 Experiment Station Road
Hood River, OR 97031
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www.marc.org/Environment/Water

What's the Problem?

For years, motor oil was commonly discarded in ways that neither protected the environment nor conserved its value. Each year in the US, an estimated 200 million gallons of used motor oil are lost by being dumped on the ground, tossed in the trash (ending up in landfills), or poured down sewers and storm drains.

This contaminates the soil and pollutes groundwater, streams and rivers. Used oil from ATVs, jet skis, boats, lawn mowers, and other motorized items threatens the environment just as much as oil from automobiles.

Recycling used motor oil reduces the threat of pollution. When you recycle used oil, you are protecting the environment and conserving a valuable resource. If all of the used oil that is improperly disposed of were properly recycled, the United States could save thousands of barrels of oil each day.

Used oil never wears out—it just gets dirty, but can be recycled, cleaned and used again. Used oil that is properly handled can be re-refined into lubricants, processed into fuel oils, and used as raw materials for the refining and petrochemical industries.

(US Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Solid Waste, 1994)

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Facts About Used Oil

Used motor oil can contain concentrations of heavy metals such as zinc, lead, and cadmium that can harm wildlife, vegetation, surface water ground water and drinking water when not disposed properly.

Just one gallon of used oil can contaminate up to one million gallons of drinking water. Additionally, used oil that ends up in the country's rivers, lakes and streams can threaten aquatic life.

When oil enters a body of water, it causes a surface film that blocks the oxygen and sunlight needed by plants and other organisms to survive.

Other automotive fluids, including antifreeze, solvents and gasoline are also harmful to the environment when not recycled or disposed of correctly. When used motor oil is mixed with other automotive fluids, it is considered contaminated and cannot be collected for recycling.

What Can You Do?

There are things that every citizen can do at home and in their community to help prevent illegal dumping and oil pollution to our water:

- 1 Recycle used motor oil at Hood River Garbage Service transfer station, 3440 Guignard Drive, Hood River • Mon-Sat 9am-5pm 541-386-2272
- 2 For pick-up service of large amounts of used oil and automotive fluids, contact ThermoFluids Inc., Clackamas OR 1-800-350-7565 www.thermofluids.com



Recycling information provided by:
Tri-County Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program
Serving Wasco, Sherman & Hood River counties
541-506-2636 • www.tricountyrecycle.com

- 3 Some local automotive businesses that offer free recycling of used oil and other automotive materials include:
John's Equipment Repair, 4301 Barrett Dr. Hood River 541-386-5517 *(oil and used batteries)*
Los Hermanos Auto Shop, 3365 Stadelman Dr. Hood River 541-354-5880 *(oil only)*
River's Edge, 1100 Tucker Road Hood River 541-386-6944 *(oil, filters, batteries and anti-freeze)*
Gehrig's Chevron Station, 3387 Odell Hwy Hood River 541-354-1202 *(oil only)*
Larry's Auto Repair, 7253 2nd St. Parkdale 541-352-7208 *(oil only)*
- 4 If you change your own oil, get a reusable oil container, or use 1 gallon milk jugs. Drain the oil carefully into the container, avoiding splatter and spills.
- 5 Request re-refined motor oil when you get your oil changed. Re-refined motor oil must meet the same American Petroleum Institute (API) certification standards as virgin motor oil.
- 6 Cars that leak oil and other automotive fluids are a big source of water pollution. Have your car checked for any leaking fluids that might run-off into storm drains.
- 7 Community storm drain stenciling events are a good way to get the word out about what should and shouldn't go down storm drains. Many programs focus on the dangers of mixing oil and water.

