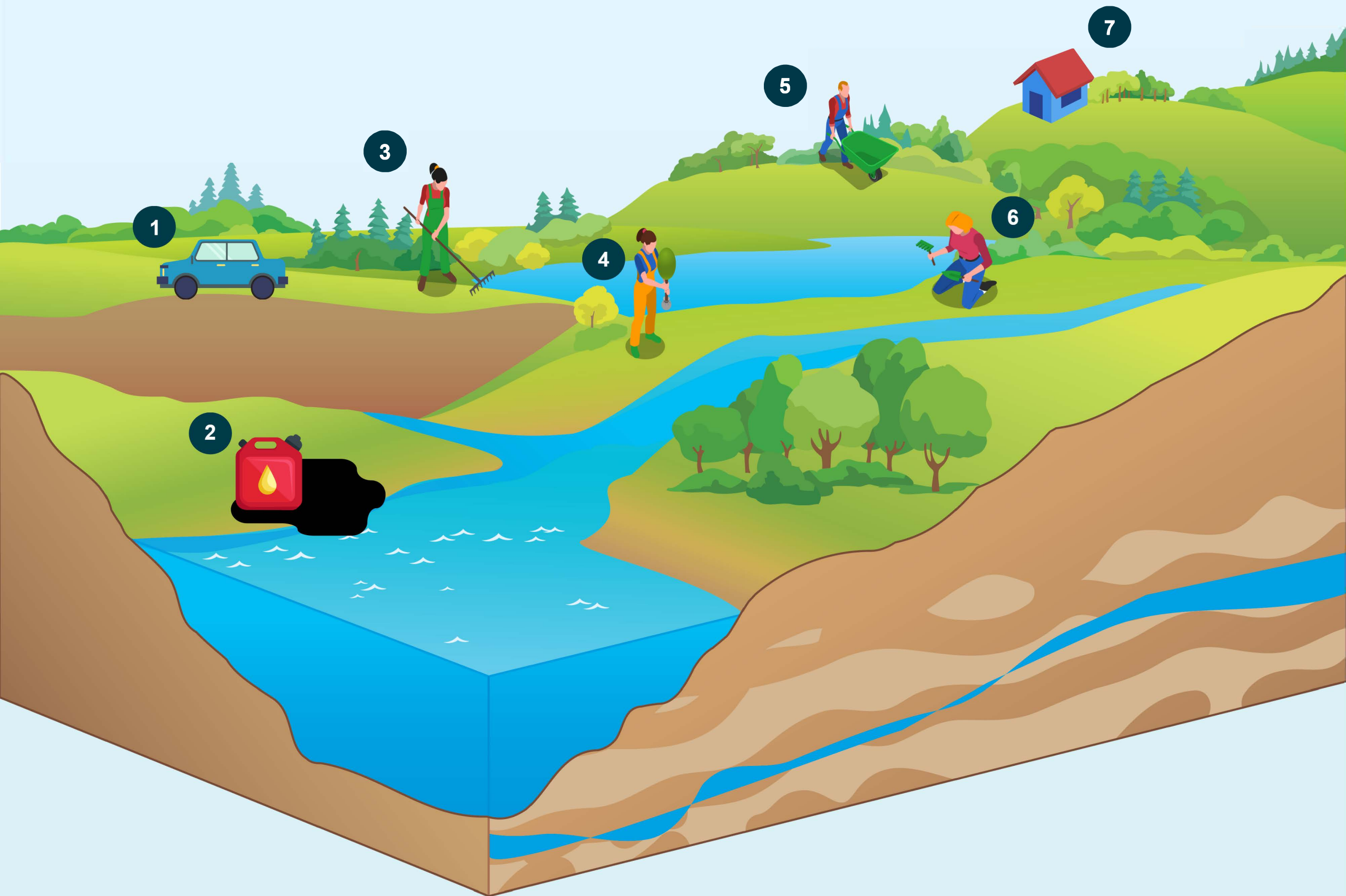


What is stormwater and why does it matter?



What is Stormwater?

Dictionary.com defines stormwater as “an abnormal amount of surface water due to heavy rain or a snowstorm.” Stormwater that does not soak into the ground, aka runoff, originates from impermeable sources such as sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, roads, and rooftops.

Why is Stormwater a Concern?

As stormwater runoff flows over land, it picks up pollutants and debris such as spilled fuel, oils, greases, antifreeze, grass clippings, litter, animal waste, fertilizer, and pesticides. Runoff carries these pollutants into our local creeks, streams, and other waterways used for swimming, recreation, or as a source for drinking water. Polluted stormwater harms plants, fish, animals, and even people.

The amount or volume of stormwater runoff can also create flooding problems. The more stormwater that does not soak into the ground, the more that enters a waterway, creating the potential for flooding.

What is MS4?

MS4 stands for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems. MS4 includes curbs, gutters, ditches, naturally occurring and manmade channels, pipes, tunnels, catch basins, and storm drains owned and maintained by a municipality. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection require municipalities to develop and implement best management practices to protect water quality, enhance water availability, and reduce flooding potential through effective stormwater management.

What Can You Do?

- 1 Auto Care and Water Pollution**
Keep your car tuned up and running efficiently. A properly tuned car causes less air and water pollution. [Click here to learn more.](#)
- 2 Illicit Discharge**
Improperly dumped waste makes its way into our waterways through stormwater runoff. Educate yourself on proper disposal practices with our [fact sheet](#).
- 3 Maintenance of Stormwater Facilities**
Stormwater facilities are an important tool in improving the quality of our waterways. [Learn how you can help maintain them.](#)
- 4 Earth Day and Stormwater...a Call to Action**
Celebrate Earth Day every day! [Follow this link to find out how you can participate in Earth Day activities throughout the year.](#)
- 5 Lawn Care for Water Quality**
How can you keep your lawn the envy of the neighborhood, while exercising good environmental practices? [Click here to find out.](#)
- 6 Riparian Buffers and Streamside Care**
Riparian buffers protect our waterways and play a key role in improving stormwater quantity and quality. [Find out why they are important to our waterways.](#)
- 7 Household Hazardous Waste and Stormwater**
Everyday products we use in our home can present a threat to people and the environment. [Learn how to properly dispose of household hazardous waste.](#)