



Not In My Back Yard!

Don't let **surface runoff** from your property **pollute**



Much of the pollution in the Coves ponds was carried there by surface runoff from homes and businesses in the surrounding neighbourhoods. You can conserve water on your property and reduce the amount of pollutants going into the ponds with the help of this guide.

What's the problem?

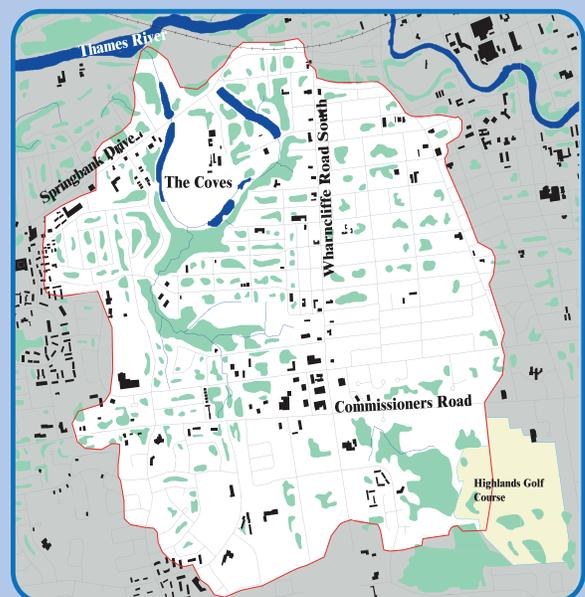
Homes and businesses in the **Coves Subwatershed** have a low proportion of natural vegetative cover and a high proportion of unnatural surfaces, such as driveways, parking lots, lawns and patios. These surfaces do not allow water to soak into the ground as it naturally would. Instead, runoff flows over such surfaces picking up pollutants (such as pesticides, nutrients, sediment, salt, oil, and bacteria) and carrying them to the Coves.

Some of the many effects of surface runoff pollution on the environment include habitat destruction, reduced biodiversity and elevated algae growth (*Environment Canada*).

Do you live, work or play in the Coves Subwatershed?

The **Coves Subwatershed** is the area where all water that falls on the ground, as precipitation or otherwise, drains to the Coves ponds through storm sewers or natural drainage channels. The surface runoff from all residential and commercial properties in this area impacts the water quality of the Coves.

For a more detailed look see www.thecoves.ca under *About the Coves*



What can you do?

You can help lessen the pollution of the Coves by reducing the area covered by unnatural surfaces on your property and the amount of pollutants available to be washed away by runoff.

Do sweep your driveway and pick up after your pets

Don't water your lawn/garden in a way that much of it runs off your property - use soaker hoses instead of sprinklers

Do wash your car on the lawn instead of the driveway



Don't connect downspouts directly to the storm sewer or direct them down a driveway

Do redirect downspouts to vegetated areas and plant a rain garden

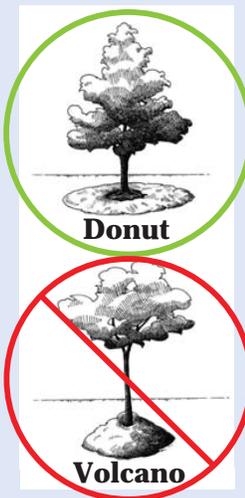
Don't dump anything into storm sewers

Do capture runoff with rain barrels for later use

A rain garden is a simple, natural way to conserve thousands of litres of water every year which would be lost by a downspout outletting to a driveway (topleft).

Smart Mulching

Proper mulching can dramatically increase water retention. Apply 5 - 10 cm of mulch in a "donut" around trees/shrubs, out to the tips of the tree's outermost branches if possible. Do not heap mulch up the trunk in a "volcano". The outer edge of the donut should be the highest point to encourage water to stay where it's needed.



We can help!

The Friends of the Coves can help property owners manage their surface runoff. Contact us for advice at 519-640-5397 or contact@thecoves.ca

We also offer the following products and services:

- **Rain Barrels/Composters**
Both can be purchased, when available, by members for a discounted price.
- **Green Garden Visits**
If you are a member of Friends of the Coves, call now to book your visit to discuss water conservation, composting, native plants and providing wildlife habitat. Free-of-charge to members who live within the Coves Subwatershed.

- **Native Plants**
When using site appropriate plants, native to this region, watering is rarely necessary because they have evolved with only the water naturally available in this region. When there is sufficient interest among members, we will coordinate group orders of native plants from nurseries in Southwestern Ontario. This will save driving time and other expenses - gaining discounts for everyone. We also advertise local plant sales where native plants will be available on our website.



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