A stormwater flow is formed when rain or melting snow runs over driveways, lawns, and sidewalks. As it moves, it picks up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants. Stormwater can flow into a storm sewer system or directly into a lake, stream, river, wetland, or coastal water. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the waterbodies we use for swimming, fishing, and providing drinking water. Polluted runoff is the nation’s greatest threat to clean water.

By practicing healthy household habits, homeowners can keep common pollutants like pesticides, pet waste, grass clippings, and automotive fluids off the ground and out of stormwater. Adopt these healthy household habits and help protect lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, and coastal waters. Remember to share the habits with your neighbors!

Healthy Household Habits for Clean Water

Vehicle and Garage

- Use a commercial car wash or wash your car on a lawn or other unpaved surface to minimize the amount of dirty, soapy water flowing into the storm drain and eventually into your local waterbody.
- Check your car, boat, motorcycle, and other machinery and equipment for leaks and spills. Make repairs as soon as possible. Clean up spills with absorbent materials like kitty litter or sand, and don’t rinse the spills into a nearby storm drain. Remember to properly dispose of the absorbent material.
- Recycle used oil and other automotive fluids at participating service stations. Don’t dump these chemicals down the storm drain or dispose of them in your trash.

Lawn and Garden

- Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly. When use is necessary, use these chemicals in the recommended amounts. Avoid application if the forecast calls for rain; otherwise, chemicals will be washed into your local stream.
- Select native plants and grasses that are drought- and pest-resistant. Native plants require less water, fertilizer, and pesticides.
- Sweep up yard debris, rather than hosing down areas. Compost or recycle yard waste when possible.
- Don’t overwater your lawn. Water during the cool times of the day, and don’t let water run off into the storm drain.
- Cover piles of dirt and mulch being used in landscaping projects to prevent these pollutants from blowing or washing off your yard and into local waterbodies. Vegetate bare spots in your yard to prevent soil erosion.

Home Repair and Improvement

- Before beginning an outdoor project, locate the nearest storm drains and protect them from debris and other materials.
- Sweep up and properly dispose of construction debris such as concrete and mortar.
- Use hazardous substances like paints, solvents, and cleaners in the smallest amounts possible, and follow the directions on the label. Clean up spills immediately, and dispose of the waste safely. Store substances properly to avoid leaks and spills.
- Purchase and use nontoxic, biodegradable, recycled, and recyclable products whenever possible.
- Clean paint brushes in a sink, not outdoors. Filter and reuse paint thinner when using oil-based paints. Properly dispose of excess paints through a household hazardous waste collection program, or donate unused paint to local organizations.
- Reduce the amount of paved area and increase the amount of vegetated area in your yard. Use native plants in your landscaping to reduce the need for watering during dry periods. Consider directing downspouts away from paved surfaces onto lawns and other measures to increase infiltration and reduce polluted runoff.
Remember: Only rain down the drain!

For more information, visit

www.epa.gov/nflpd/stormwater

or

www.epa.gov/nps

EPA

United States

Environmental Protection Agency

EPA 333-F3-003
January 2009

Yield: 1 cup

Recipe: 1 cup

Preparation: Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Add eggs, butter, milk, and vanilla extract. Mix well. Stir in chocolate chips. Pour batter into prepared baking dish. Bake for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes. Cut into squares and serve warm.

Recipe Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish.
3. In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt.
4. Add eggs, butter, milk, and vanilla extract. Mix well.
5. Stir in chocolate chips.
6. Pour batter into prepared baking dish.
7. Bake for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
8. Cool for 10 minutes. Cut into squares and serve warm.

Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1 1/4 cups milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Nutritional Information:

- Calories: 250
- Total Fat: 10g
- Cholesterol: 40mg
- Sodium: 120mg
- Total Carbohydrates: 30g
- Dietary Fiber: 0g
- Sugars: 20g

Serving Size: 1 square

 certifications: Allergen and Gluten-Free.

product packaging: Biodegradable and recyclable.