

# WINTER E-NEWSLETTER – PESTICIDE USE AND WATER QUALITY

## Waters Will Flow

### *Stormwater and Pesticides*

California’s wet weather season typically falls between October and April, and stormwater runoff from these seasonal storms can have a big impact on our local water quality.

Stormwater is water from rain or snowmelt that flows over the landscape. This water can then travel, untreated, into the storm drain system and ultimately to the local waterbodies. As the stormwater comes into contact with the urban landscape it can become contaminated with substances such as motor oil, pet waste, trash, and pesticides, which can harm our waterways.

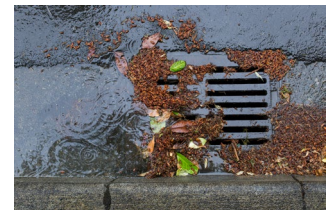


## Pesticides and Water Quality

Pesticides are toxic chemicals that are intended to kill pests, such as unwanted insects and plants. However, if these chemicals end up in our waterways, they can harm the aquatic plants and animals.

Follow these tips to help keep pesticides out of our streams and rivers:

- Consider less-toxic alternatives first. Visit [Our Water, Our World](#) to learn more.
- Always read product labels and follow the instructions when applying chemicals.
- Choose ready-to-use products instead of concentrates to reduce the risk of spills and chemical exposure.
  - If you do spill a pesticide, clean it up immediately by using something absorbent, like cat litter, sawdust, or paper towels, to soak up the chemical. Dispose of the absorbent material at a household hazardous waste facility. Never wash a spilled pesticide into the street or a storm drain!
  - To find household hazardous waste [facilities near you](#) and El Dorado County provided [collection events](#), visit the County’s Environmental Management Department’s [webpage](#) or contact them directly at (530) 621-5300 or at [emd.info@edcgov.us](mailto:emd.info@edcgov.us).
- Be aware of your water usage. Prevent contaminated water from entering local waterbodies by avoiding watering plants soon after pesticide application and by following [these irrigation tips](#).



## LEARN MORE!

Visit [Our Water, Our World](#) for more [information about safely using and disposing of pesticides](#).

## Pyrethroid Pesticides in Our Water

Although there are many different types of pesticides, one group of pesticides called *pyrethroids* is of particular concern because they are being found in surface waters. Pyrethroid pesticides are primarily used for ants, cockroaches, and other insects. However, it takes them a long time to break down into less harmful components once they’re in the environment, which means that they can cause unintended harm to many other types of beneficial insects (e.g., bees, ladybugs) and aquatic life. Products that contain

pyrethroids typically have active ingredients that end with the letters “-thrin.” When reading the pesticide label, look to see if any of the active ingredients include the following:



- *Permethrin*
- *Bifenthrin*
- *Cyfluthrin*
- *Beta-cyfluthrin*
- *Cypermethrin*
- *Deltamethrin*
- *Lambda-cyhalothrin*
- *Tralomethrin*
- *Esfenvalerate (an exception to the -thrin rule!)*

If a pyrethroid is an active ingredient, consider other ways that you might address the pest, such as other less toxic pesticides or controls that do not require the use of a pesticide.

If you’re interested in purchasing less-toxic pesticide products, next time you’re at your local garden supply store, be sure to look for “point-of-purchase” displays, such as shelf edging or tags, display stands with fact sheets, banners, and other educational materials. Our Water, Our World is one program that provides these materials in northern California. [Click here to find a participating store](#) near you.

For more information about how El Dorado County is working toward improving local water quality, please visit the [Tahoe Planning and Stormwater Management Homepage](#) or contact us at:

Phone: (530) 573-7906

Email: [stormwater@edcgov.us](mailto:stormwater@edcgov.us)

