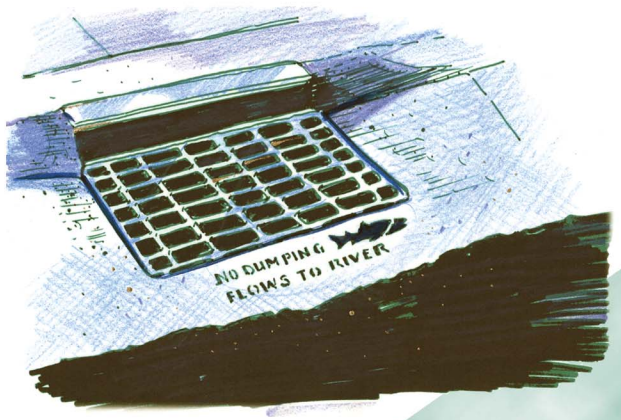
Answer:
They all do.



A little bit can go a long way.

It doesn't take a large amount of chemicals or soaps to pollute an aquatic system. If you were to rinse out a single paint brush that contained latex paint and let it run down the gutter, you would release enough chemicals to compromise one-quarter mile of stream habitat.

For more information:

800-CLEANUP
(800-253-2687)

To report oil spills:

800-OIL-SPILLS
(800-645-7745)

If you observe a person pouring chemicals into a storm drain, call:

888-DFG-CALTIP
(888-334-2258)

Department of Fish and Game
1416 9th Street, 12th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
www.dfg.ca.gov
(916)653-6420

Alternate communication format available upon request. If reasonable accommodation is needed call Patricia Lopez at (916) 653-6420 or the California Relay (Telephone) Service for the deaf or hearing-impaired from TDD phones at 1-800-735-2929 or 711.

It only takes a little bit

Question:
Which of these will harm your local creek?

Common misconceptions

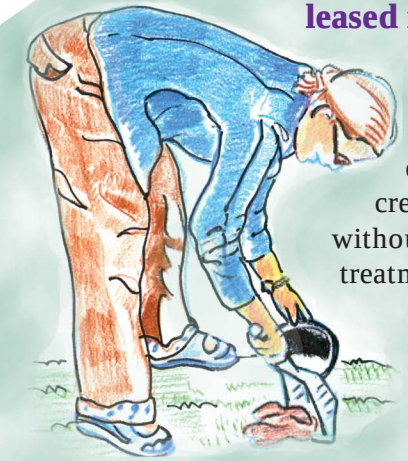
(True or false?)

- **There are no creeks near here. False.**
  Just because you can't see the creek, doesn't mean it isn't there. Access to the creek may be as close as your driveway! Your driveway flows into a gutter or ditch, which then feeds into a storm drain. These storm drains feed directly into creeks.

- **Only a little bit won't hurt. False.**
  Even small amounts of soap, fertilizers, oil and chemicals will harm a creek, harming many of the animals living there.

- **Biodegradable products do not harm aquatic life. False.**
  Biodegradable products need time to break down before they are safe. When biodegradable products enter a creek, they are generally still toxic and can kill animals and plants.

- **The water that goes down storm drains is cleaned before it is released into the bay. False.**
  Almost all storm drains empty directly into rivers, creeks and bays without any type of treatment at all.



Pet waste can be flushed down the toilet or put in the trash.

Properly washing paint brushes keeps paint chemicals out of creeks.

How much is too much?

Anything other than water that flows into a storm drain can harm the creek and the wildlife that depends upon it.

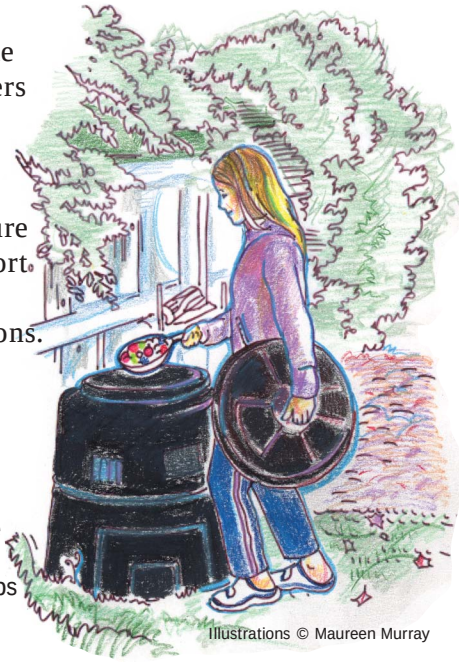
To be safe for fish...

1 ounce of this product	needs to be diluted with this many ounces of water ...
Acrylic house paint	10,000
Liquid dish soap	32,500
Shampoo	769
Fruit drink	100
Household bleach	312,500
Biodegradeble cleaner	17,857
General degreaser	100,000
One car wash	10,000

Source: Pollution Response Manual, 1998, California Department of Fish and Game, based on original research performed by the DFG Water Quality Laboratory.

What can I do?

- Keep garbage and other debris from entering storm drains. This includes not allowing anything other than water to flow down your driveway.
- When walking your pet, it is courteous and healthful to pick up pet waste from yards and streets. Coliform bacteria in the waste can harm aquatic life.
- Use the least toxic products for cleaning and garden maintenance.
- Never exceed manufacturers' recommendations for use of chemical products.
- Dispose of home chemicals at approved household hazardous waste collection sites.
- Maintain your vehicle to keep fluids from dripping onto the pavement.
- Call the numbers on the back of this brochure to report any violations.



Composting leaves and garden waste helps your yard and keeps debris out of creeks.

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