



## Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) aka Septic Systems

Proper maintenance of OWTS can prevent damage that could lead to environmentally harmful spills and expensive repairs.

- **Protect It and Inspect It.** Have a professional inspect your OWTS regularly, and pump the septic tank as necessary, usually every 3 to 5 years.
- **Think at the Sink.** Avoid pouring fats, grease and solids down the drain. These substances can clog a system's pipes and drainfield.
- **Don't Overload the Commode.** Never flush coffee grounds, wipes, feminine hygiene products, cigarette butts, or cat litter.
- **Shield Your Field.** Do not drive or park vehicles on the drainfield; the weight could damage buried pipes.
- **Don't Strain Your Drain.** Install a graywater system to reduce the load on your system and conserve water. Graywater systems require a City permit.
- **Plant Low Groundcover.** Avoid root damage to your system.

Report runoff or pollution to the City at [MalibuCity.org/Polluter](http://MalibuCity.org/Polluter)



**Stormwater** (rain) and urban runoff pick up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants and carry them into storm drains and waterways. Everything that flows into a storm drain or creek can end up in the ocean, usually without being treated. Urban runoff, caused by over-irrigation, car washing and other outdoor washing, is a threat to clean water and can make swimmers and surfers sick, as well as impact wildlife.

A large section of Malibu's coastline was designated as an Area of Special Biological Significance (ASBS) to preserve unique ocean habitats. Urban runoff is prohibited from reaching the ASBS in order to maintain its natural water quality. The City is protective of the entire coast, so dry-weather runoff is not allowed anywhere in Malibu.

By practicing healthy household habits, you can keep common pollutants off the ground and out of local water bodies.

## Keep It Clean, *Malibu*

Only rain is allowed to runoff your property.

## RESOURCES

City of Malibu  
[MalibuCity.org/Enviro](http://MalibuCity.org/Enviro)  
County of Los Angeles  
[CleanLA.com](http://CleanLA.com)

Living Lightly in the  
Santa Monica Mountains  
[LivingLightlyGuide.org](http://LivingLightlyGuide.org)

SoCal Water Smart Rebates  
[SoCalWaterSmart.com](http://SoCalWaterSmart.com)

## REACH US



One Call to City Hall  
310-456-CITY (456-2489) EXT 311  
Report non-life threatening emergencies.

Subscribe to Environmental Programs calendar and notifications at  
[www.MalibuCity.org/NotifyMe](http://www.MalibuCity.org/NotifyMe).



23825 Stuart Ranch Rd  
Malibu, CA 90265



Facebook : @MalibuEnviro  
Twitter: @MalibuEnviroDpt  
Instagram: @KeepItCleanMalibu



CITY OF MALIBU  
Environmental Sustainability Department

# A Resident's Guide to Clean Water

Keep It Clean, *Malibu*





## LAWN & GARDEN



By creating an Ocean Friendly Garden (OFG), you can stop water runoff from leaving your property and maintain a beautiful garden with less water. OFGs apply “CPR” - Conservation, Permeability and Retention - to cultivate living soil, retain rainwater, create wildlife habitat and use minimal irrigation, which is also known as the watershed approach.

- **Water 8:00 PM - 8:00 AM.** Avoid irrigating within 48 hours before or after rain. Remember to reset your controller after a power outage.
- **No Irrigation Water Runoff.** Check your irrigation system regularly for broken or misdirected sprinklers.
- **Don't Panic, It's Organic.** Try natural fertilizers like compost or worm tea. Avoid applying anything within 48 hours before rain.
- **Choose native plants and grasses that are drought, fire and pest-resistant.** Natives are adapted to the local climate and need minimal fertilizer and pesticides.
- **Clean Up, Seal Up, Trap Up.** Use integrated pest management instead of rodent poisons. Learn more at [MalibuCity.org/PoisonFree](http://MalibuCity.org/PoisonFree).
- **Sweep Up the Green.** Do not blow or hose yard waste into the street. Clippings can clog storm drains, generate bacteria as it breaks down, and wash into nearby waterbodies.
- **Compost Green Waste.** Place it in the correct bin or use the organic materials in your own backyard compost bin. Find free local workshops at [SmartGardening.com](http://SmartGardening.com).
- **Cover Piles of Dirt and Mulch.** Help prevent the material from being blown or washed away and becoming pollution.
- **Prevent Soil Erosion.** Use mulch or plant fast-growing annual and perennial groundcover.



## PET CARE

If you don't want to swim in it, pick it up. Always clean up your dog and horse waste. Pet waste contains bacteria and nutrients that can wash into a storm drain and waterbody and harm aquatic life.



## SWIMMING POOL & SPA

Empty your swimming pool only when necessary. Pool water must be pumped and hauled offsite to a treatment facility or slowly drained to landscaping on your property.

- Never drain swimming pools, spas and fountains to the street or into a storm drain.
- De-chlorinate pool water before irrigating plants. Irrigation water must soak into the ground on the property it originated. Runoff from your site is not allowed.
- Drain backwash from cleaning pool filters to an area where it will not flow off the property or enter a storm drain.
- Store pool and spa chemicals to prevent leaks and spills, preferably in a covered area to avoid exposure to stormwater.



## HOME REPAIR & IMPROVEMENT

Before beginning an outdoor project, locate storm drains and protect them from runoff, debris, dirt, and other pollutants. We encourage you to use nontoxic, low VOC, biodegradable, recycled content and recyclable products.

- Use hazardous materials like paints, solvents and cleaners sparingly. Store substances properly to avoid leaks and spills.
- Never clean paint brushes or rinse paint containers into a street, storm drain or septic system. Dispose of paint at a local household hazardous waste collection event.
- Reduce hardscapes in your yard. Directing downspouts into landscaping or installing rain barrels are a great way to collect water from your roof to use later on your garden.
- Sweep up and properly dispose of construction debris like concrete and mortar.



## VEHICLE & GARAGE

When you are cleaning or working on your vehicles, remember that urban runoff from your property is not allowed.

- Use a commercial car wash. They usually recycle the wash water.
- At home, wash vehicles where the wash water can soak into the ground or landscaping. A bucket wash will conserve water and prevent runoff.
- Commercial mobile detailers must use a containment mat to prevent water runoff and recycle the wash water.
- Hoses must be fitted with an automatic shut off nozzle.
- Check your car, boat, motorcycle and other machinery for leaks and spills. Clean up spilled fluids with an absorbent material like cat litter or sand and sweep it up.
- Recycle motor oil and anti-freeze.

CITY & COUNTY HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS AND E-WASTE COLLECTION

[MalibuCity.org/HHW](http://MalibuCity.org/HHW) (Limited items accepted)  
[CleanLA.com](http://CleanLA.com) or call 888-253-2652 (888-CleanLA)