

Allen County Partnership for Water Quality

**WATER MATTERS**

Allison Van Zandt

## Paved Surfaces and Water Quality

When considering factors that affect water quality, it might be rare that homeowners consider their driveways or concrete patios. Did you know that every time it rains, water that is not absorbed by the ground runs off these paved surfaces into a storm drain, picking up hazardous materials and pollutants? Once in a storm drain, the motor oil, antifreeze, pet waste, and fertilizers are not filtered out before reaching our rivers and streams.

How can you avoid contributing to this pollution? Try incorporating a surface into your lawn or garden area that allows the rain water to reach the soil, rather than run into the storm sewers during a heavy rain. Instead of concrete patios, asphalt driveways, and paved paths, try wood decks, gravel or pervious asphalt driveways, and mulched paths. Instead of diverting storm water to drains, collect the water in rain barrels for later use in your garden. It's not difficult to make small changes that affect water quality in Allen County!