

How You Can Help

Water is life—all living things need clean, healthy water—and we all have a role to play in protecting water, in Douglas Creek and in other streams, ponds, and lakes. Anything you can do to reduce pollution, conserve resources, and protect habitat helps, but here are some ideas that will help salmon, streams, and you!

Plant a Rain Garden

If you have a natural depression on your property, consider a rain garden planted with appropriate native species that can tolerate these conditions. Rain gardens hold water that runs off roofs, driveways, patios, and lawns, so that it can slowly seep into the soil. Despite the name, rain gardens are dry most of the time. They simply hold water during and after a heavy rainfall, and keep sediments, fertilizers, chemicals, oil, and other pollutants from entering nearby streams and ponds. Purpose built rain gardens need to be connected to the municipal storm drain system to direct overflow during heavy rain storm events.



Conserve Water

Our region can be a rainy place, it is also one of the driest places in the summer, so do all you can to save water. Use rain barrels to collect water for your garden, fix leaky faucets, and install water-saving toilets and showerheads. It's okay to let your lawn turn brown, too. The roots of most lawn grasses can survive many weeks, or even months without water and come back green when the fall rain returns. Don't forget to water the tree in the middle of the lawn.



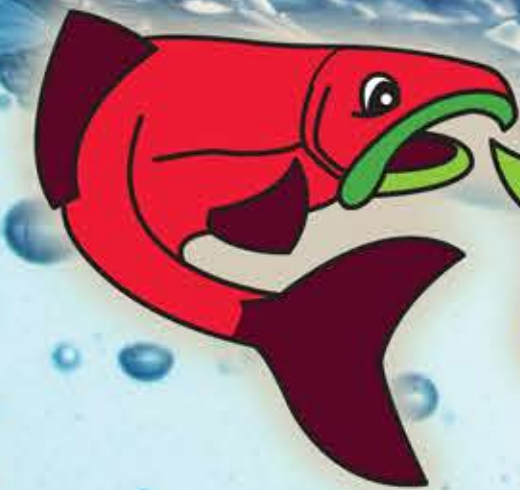
Let the Earth Soak

Hard surfaces like roads, sidewalks, buildings and more tend to shed water quickly. When installing a pathway or driveway, consider a permeable surface such as paving stones, cobbles or gravel that allow water to soak into the ground below, replenishing the water table. Permeable surfaces help reduce the volume of stormwater that enters streams and rivers as it travels to the ocean. By reducing the volume of water entering streams during heavy rain can prevent excessive erosion of streambanks, instream spawning habitat and the shoreline.



Cut the Chemicals

Do all you can to keep soil and water clean by thinking about what might flow off of your property. Maintain your vehicles to reduce oil leaks and minimize the use of pesticides and fertilizers in your yard. The region's sewer treatment system is not meant to deal with medications, paint or other potential toxic substances – consult with the appropriate agencies regarding disposal. Saanich Council adopted a Pesticide Bylaw in 2010 which means that residential pesticide use is generally no longer permitted on lawns and gardens. Learn more at saanich.ca.



Help your parents grow a rain garden. There are many plants that like it wet. Can you name some of them?

