

## SEVEN CLEAN WATER ACTIONS YOU CAN DO



The mission of the Rensselaer Land Trust is to conserve the open spaces, watersheds, and natural habitats of Rensselaer County, for the benefit of our communities and future generations.

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We might not be able to see the lake or stream from our window, but it's there. It might be a small stream or ditch or even the storm drain in the street. All of these basins, waterways, and conduits lead to our lakes and streams. So, what we do at home affects our water supply!

### RESOURCES

**Blue-Green Harmful Algal Blooms**  
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/77118.html>

**Disposal of Household Hazardous Waste**  
Call **DEC's Region 4** Office to obtain disposal information (Rensselaer County)  
(518) 357-2234

**Oil Disposal**  
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8786.html>

**Pharmaceuticals in New York's Waters**  
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/45083.html>

**Learn More About Household Hazardous Waste**  
<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8485.html>

**Rensselaer Land Trust**  
[www.renstrust.org](http://www.renstrust.org)

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*Please make checks payable to: Rensselaer Land Trust*

I would like to charge my credit card: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover  
Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Monthly Giving Program:** Visit our website [www.renstrust.org](http://www.renstrust.org) to easily and securely sign-up for recurring monthly donations using your credit card.



FERTILIZE SPARINGLY  
AND CARINGLY



Our streets and yards drain into our lakes and streams. So, when we fertilize our lawns, we also fertilize our lakes and streams. While chemical fertilizer is good for our lawn, it's bad for our water. Fertilizer in our lakes and streams causes algae to grow. Algae can form large blooms and use oxygen that fish need to survive. We all need to be aware of the cumulative effects of our lawn care practice

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Get a soil test and follow its recommendations for fertilizer. Most lawns don't need much fertilizer. If yours does, choose a slow-release fertilizer low in phosphorus that contains at least half of its nitrogen in a "water insoluble" form (check the ingredients on the label). Apply fertilizers with care and don't over fertilize. Keep fertilizer away from lakes, streams, and storm drains, and sweep excess fertilizer back onto your lawn. Consider using native plantings that don't require as much maintenance and fertilizer. Use compost and mulch to reduce or eliminate the use of chemical fertilizers.

CAREFULLY STORE AND  
DISPOSE OF HOUSEHOLD  
HAZARDOUS WASTE



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Antifreeze, household cleaners, pharmaceuticals, gasoline, pesticides, oil paints, solvents, and motor oil are just some of the common household products that enter our watershed and negatively affect water quality and impact fish and wildlife. We can help keep these out of our lakes and streams.

KEEP YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM DOING  
ITS JOB

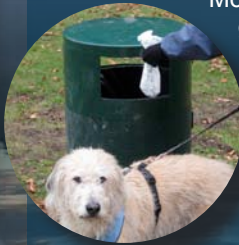


Without regular checks and pumping, septic systems can fail, causing severe water quality problems and costly repairs. Releases from poorly maintained septic systems can contaminate groundwater and surface water with chemicals, nutrients, and bacteria.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Have your septic tank inspected and pumped regularly. Watch for signs of septic failure, such as standing water, foul odors, patches of lush growth in the area of your leach field, and backed up drains and toilets.

CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR PET

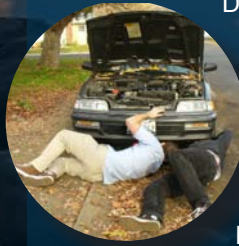


Most of us pick up after our pets to be a good neighbors and to keep our yard clean. But there's another important reason to do so. Pet waste contains bacteria that are harmful to us and our water. Leaving it on the sidewalk or lawn allows this source of harmful bacteria to be transported into storm drains and then into our lakes and streams.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Whether on a walk or in your yard, clean up after your pet and dispose of waste promptly in the toilet or trash.

PRACTICE GOOD CAR CARE



Did you know that just four quarts of oil from your car's engine can form an eight-acre oil slick if spilled or released down a storm drain? Our watershed would be severely impacted by such a spill.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Keep your car tuned and fix leaks promptly. Not only will this make your car run better and last longer, it will be good for our lakes, streams, and air.

CHOOSE EARTH-FRIENDLY  
LANDSCAPING



When deciding how to landscape your yard, you can choose from among many earth-friendly options to protect your kids, pets, and the environment from harm. These earth-friendly landscaping options can protect the lakes and streams within your watershed.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Choose native plants. Once established, native plants require less maintenance because they tolerate dry weather and resist disease. Use pesticides sparingly. Put mulch around trees and plants to reduce the growth of weeds naturally and to minimize the need for watering. Water your lawn only when it needs it (1-2 times a week is usually sufficient). Avoid paving surfaces when building or remodeling – use stones, bricks, sand or gravel instead. This allows stormwater to percolate naturally into the ground and to replenish the groundwater instead of running off.

SAVE WATER



Did you know that individually we use about 77 gallons of water each day? When we overwater our lawns, the runoff can easily carry pollution to the storm drains and to our lakes and streams.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Consider using a broom instead of a hose to clean sidewalks and driveways. Use rain barrels to catch water for plantings. Direct hoses and sprinklers on the lawn, not the driveway. Water when necessary instead of on a fixed schedule. Remember, saving water also saves you money.

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In 2008, the Rensselaer Land Trust became one of the first 38 land trusts in the country to obtain accreditation through the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

YES, I want to support Rensselaer Land Trust's important work to conserve Rensselaer County's open spaces, watersheds, and natural habitats for our communities and future generations.

Enclosed is my contribution of:

- ☐ Watershed Circle \$3,000
- ☐ Land Steward \$1,000
- ☐ Advocate \$500
- ☐ Sustaining \$250
- ☐ Supporter \$100
- ☐ Family \$50
- ☐ Individual \$30
- ☐ Monthly Giving Program
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Gifts are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Rensselaer Land Trust (RLT) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Founded in 1987, we have protected 1116 acres, owning eight preserves with 330 acres and holding conservation easements on 13 properties with 686 acres. Your donations are our primary funding source. A copy of our annual report may be obtained from our website at [www.renstrust.org](http://www.renstrust.org) or from the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, NY 10271.