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**Vol. 8, No. 3**

## **We All Deserve Clean Water**

Water defines our region in many ways. The enormous trees that depend on frequent rains, cool, misty mornings, and of course, the beautiful lakes, rivers, streams, and Salish Sea, our inland waterway that anchors this region as South Puget Sound. When we talk to people about what they care about, clean water is right up there with the health and happiness of their families and of course, we know water is essential for all life.

In Thurston County, we have a great source of clean and healthy drinking water right underneath our feet. Just about all of us drink water fed by underground aquifers and that's part of why it's so important to be careful about what you put onto the ground. The other reason it's important to be aware of what goes on the ground is that our abundant rain can collect bacteria from pet waste, unused nutrients from fertilizers, and hazardous weed and bug killers, and carry them to the nearest body of water. Let's spend the summer [conserving water](#), [celebrating water](#), and of course, keeping hydrated by drinking plenty of water!



## HOME

### Stink Bugs

Stink bugs that used your home for winter rest are waking up and looking for ways to get back outside. The good news is that stink bugs don't lay eggs indoors in the winter so their offspring won't be stinking up the place but you do want to get them outside without releasing their namesake smell.



Here's how:

- Take advantage of their instinct to drop down when scared and place a container of soapy water underneath them. Threaten them with a broom or stick!
- Lightly contain them in a tissue (don't crush) and toss outdoors.
- If there are a lot of them, vacuum them up and take the vacuum bag to the outside trash for disposal.
- If all else fails, choose the safest product at [www.GrowSmartGrowSafe.org](http://www.GrowSmartGrowSafe.org).

Take the time to prevent their return by repairing screens, sealing cracks, and properly storing fruits and vegetables. Trim bushes and branches away from your home and store wood and building supplies up off of the ground and as far away from your living space as possible. Check all stored boxes from the attic, basement, or shed thoroughly for pests and limit clutter to limit the places where they can hide.



## GARDEN

## Wasps

Keep these annoying yet beneficial insects in check by following these tips:

- Contain all food outdoors. Don't leave picnic scraps hanging around and make sure pet food is either immediately eaten or put away.
- Keep rain gutters and windowsills clean and in good repair. Fix broken siding to prevent wasps from building nests.
- Consider planting citronella, mint, lemongrass, and thyme where you most want to linger in your yard.
- Hang fake wasp nests to prevent wasps from moving in and encourage active populations to move somewhere else. These can be purchased or make your own by filling a brown lunch bag with crumpled newspapers. Tie the top of the filled bags and hang them near patios, eaves, doorways, sheds, and anywhere else where wasps could be an issue.
- If your prevention efforts aren't working, ask a professional to come and remove them FOR FREE. [Cascadia Venom Collectors](#) is a local company that collects many types of hornets and wasps for their venom. Keep in mind that they will only collect nests that have not had pesticides applied to them.
- If the local venom collectors aren't available and your prevention efforts aren't working, visit [www.GrowSmartGrowSafe.org](http://www.GrowSmartGrowSafe.org) and choose the least toxic products.



LAWN

## Where Does All of Our Water Go? A Stormwater Journey...

*This article was written by a guest author, Thurston County's stormwater outreach specialist, Kelsey Mae Crane. Kelsey works hard to keep our water safe and clean for her family, her community, and the future that we all depend on.*

Many of us go about our daily lives not thinking much about stormwater. It often takes a unique situation like ponding near your home or flooding on a main roadway to bring it to your attention. Stormwater management intersects with everything we care about here in Thurston County – from safe lakes to swim in, clean water to quench our thirst, and healthy salmon-bearing streams to feed our maritime culture. It is truly all connected.

Stormwater is a piece of the whole water cycle puzzle, often beginning as rain or snowmelt and flowing across our communities, over hard surfaces from high to low points. Eventually this stormwater ends up in our lakes, streams, and Puget Sound. In areas with well-draining soils, stormwater can soak into our underground water storage. This is important because roughly 90% of our drinking water in Thurston County comes from the aquifer below our feet.



How can we change everyday behaviors around our homes to protect surface and groundwater and keep stormwater runoff clear of the most harmful pollutants? One of the best solutions is practicing [Natural Yard Care](#). Avoiding quick-release fertilizers, weed and feed products, and pesticides can have a huge positive impact on local waters! Here's why:

Quick-release fertilizers are designed to deliver high doses of Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potassium (NPK) all at once. That's like sitting down for a meal and getting served breakfast, lunch, and dinner all at once...what a waste! The soil can't store all of these nutrients, and plants can't use them soon enough. When sprinkler and rainwater run off our yards, it carries any extra product directly with it into our beautiful lakes and streams. Yard care products contribute to algae blooms through a process called eutrophication. Hazardous bug and weed killers are picked up by stormwater too, and nobody wants to swim in those!

When it comes to yard care, keep your product choices as safe as possible. Look for organic and slow-release fertilizer if you are determined to fertilize, or better yet – use a mulching mower and let the grass clippings do the fertilizing for free! Consider switching to a low maintenance, drought-tolerant eco-lawn, and add flowering plants and natives that attract beneficial insects to control the bugs you don't want. Increase mulch around your yard to reduce weeds and conserve water.

Find out more about Natural Yard Care at [www.ThurstonGoGreen.org](http://www.ThurstonGoGreen.org), with this [Natural Yard Care](#) pamphlet, and check out [www.GrowSmartGrowSafe.org](http://www.GrowSmartGrowSafe.org) to find the safest products for pest and weed control.

Discover more about stormwater by taking [this free online course!](#)

As always – we're here to help! Please reach out with any questions to [kelsey.crane@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:kelsey.crane@co.thurston.wa.us).



**Q1: What is the leading threat to urban streams and Puget Sound?**

**A:** Stormwater runoff

**Q2: What is stormwater, anyway?**

**A:** Stormwater is ANY water that runs off hard surfaces. This includes rain, snowmelt, sprinkler water, water used to wash cars and building exteriors, and more. When this water is not able to soak into the ground, it flows along roads, sidewalks, parking lots, driveways, and rooftops and carries with it everything in its path like bacteria from pet waste, fertilizers, pesticides, and motor oil. It eventually drains downhill to the nearest stormwater pond, stream, lake, to Puget Sound, or soaks into our underground aquifer.

**Q3: What was historically and is still today the #1 stormwater solution?**

**A:** FORESTS! All planted areas help filter stormwater before it soaks into the ground, and stormwater ponds and other systems are specially engineered to slow and settle out stormwater, providing varying levels of treatment; however, nothing replaces the water cycle restoration and filtering action of a healthy forest.



**DIG DEEPER**

**Drinking Water**

We are grateful to have a clean source of drinking water right underneath our feet. Check out these links for information on the drinking water in your specific area:

[City of Lacey drinking water report](#)

[City of Olympia drinking water report](#)  
[City of Rainier drinking water report](#)  
[City of Tumwater drinking water report](#)  
[City of Yelm drinking water report](#)



Information for folks on a [private well](#).

How do you know if you need a [water filter](#)?

[So much more information!](#)



## EVENTS

### Connect to Farmers

#### Olympia Farmers Market

Thursday-Sunday, April-October

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

700 Capitol Way N

Olympia, WA 98501

(360) 352-9096

[www.olympiafarmersmarket.com](http://www.olympiafarmersmarket.com)



#### West Olympia Farmers Market

Saturdays, May 6-September 30

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

1919 Harrison Ave NW

Olympia, WA 98502

[wcpnc.org/market/](http://wcpnc.org/market/)



#### Tenino Farmers Market

Saturdays, May 6-September 30

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

213 Sussex Ave

Tenino, WA 98589

(360) 701-4835

[www.teninofarmersmarket.org](http://www.teninofarmersmarket.org)



#### Tumwater Farmers Market

Sundays, May-September

11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

237 Dennis St SE

Tumwater, WA 98501

(360) 888-2919

[thetumwaterfarmersmarket.com](http://thetumwaterfarmersmarket.com)

#### Yelm Farmers Market

Saturdays, May 27-September 30  
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
The Yelm Community Center  
301 Second St SE  
Yelm, WA 98597  
(360) 522-8939  
[www.yelffarmersmarket.com](http://www.yelffarmersmarket.com)

## Community Events

Check these great local calendars for up-to-date information about what's coming up.

[Thurston Conservation District](#)  
[Thurston Talk](#)  
[Experience Olympia Calendar of Events](#)  
[Stream Team Calendar](#)  
[Eventbrite](#)  
[City of Lacey Arts and Events](#)  
[City of Tumwater Special Events](#)  
[City of Tenino Community Recreation Page](#)

Thurston County Public Health and Social Services | 412 Lilly Road NE, Olympia, WA 98506-5132

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