

TOWN/VILLAGE OF HARRISON
1 HEINEMAN PLACE
HARRISON, NEW YORK 10528
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Stormwater Quarterly

Stormwater Walk

Background Information - Most of us have learned about the water cycle and how water moves from the earth to the atmosphere and back to the earth. When water falls to earth as rain, we call that STORMWATER. This activity will start you thinking about what happens to rainwater at your house or school after it hits the roof or ground. When rain falls on a roof-top it runs off the roof, into roof gutters, and out of a downspout away from the building. Rainwater that is moving over and off a surface is called runoff. Stormwater runoff happens when rain falls on any hard surface where it cannot soak into the ground. Areas with soil and plants do not have much runoff because the rainwater soaks into the ground (infiltrates). Surfaces that are hard or made of concrete have a lot of runoff because the water cannot soak in.

Instructions - Be a stormwater sleuth! Take a walk around your school or home. While walking, observe and record things that can affect the amount of stormwater runoff; such as hard surfaces, planted areas, downspouts and more. Use the activities on the following pages to collect the data. Then use the data to grade your house or school. When finished, explore and discuss ways that would help slow down stormwater so more can soak up and less will run off. Also come up with suggestions on how your neighborhood could reduce stormwater runoff.

Step 1 - Create a Tally - As you walk around your house or school keep track of how many trees, gardens and flower beds, and storm drains you see on the property. Use the tally sheet below to keep track of what you observe.

How Many...	Tally	Number
...trees?		
...gardens and shrubs and flower beds?		
...storm drains?		

Continued...

Step 2 - Take a Downspout Survey - Do you know what a downspout is? A downspout (or roof gutter) takes the water that comes off of a roof and directs the water away from the building. Some downspouts direct water onto grass, plants, mulch or rocks. This practice slows down the water runoff, giving it a chance to soak into the ground. Some downspouts direct water onto driveways, sidewalks or the street. These areas move water quickly away from a building and off a property. There can also be downspouts that take water directly to a storm drain, stream or lake.

How many downspouts direct water...	Tally	Number
...to grass or planted areas?		(A)
...to mulched or rocked areas?		(B)
...to bare dirt, a driveway, sidewalk or the street?		(C)
...to a storm drain, stream or lake?		(D)
How many downspouts does your house or school have in total? (A+B+C+D)		(E)

Step 3 - Score your house or school - Using the data collected on your stormwater walk, fill in the blank for each of the following questions. Then circle the number of points that go with that answer.

How many trees did you count? _____

More than 5: 10 points

3 to 5: 5 points

1 or 2: 3 points

0: 0 points

How many gardens and shrub or flower beds did you count? _____

More than 5: 10 points

3 to 5: 5 points

1 or 2: 3 points

0: 0 points

How many downspouts are directed onto grass, plans, mulch or rocks? _____ (A+B)

More than 5: 10 points

to 5: 5 points

or 2: 3 points

0: 0 points

What is the total number of downspouts? (E) _____

What share of downspouts point onto grass, plants, mulch or rocks? _____ (A+B/E)

They all do: 10 points

At least half of them do: 5 points

Less than half of them, but a least 1 does: 2 points

None: -5 points

Now add up all your points to see how you did.

Town/Village of Harrison

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Source: University of Nebraska Lincoln Extension