



325 7th Street South  
Fargo, ND 58103

***You are connected to a river***

- ⇨ Your rooftop is connected to your gutter
- ⇨ Your gutter is connected to your downspout
- ⇨ Your downspout is connected to your yard
- ⇨ Your yard is connected to your driveway
- ⇨ Your driveway is connected to your street
- ⇨ Your street is connected to your storm drain
- ⇨ Your storm drain is connected to a river



# RIVER CONNECTIONS

*A citizens guide to river stewardship*

Your actions affect area rivers. Whether as a riverfront property owner or as a resident of the metropolitan area—no matter your proximity—you are connected to a river.

## Help Keep Your River Clean

Rivers are fragile ecosystems that are easily affected by human activities. Items that go down the storm drains in the street go directly to a river, not to a waste water treatment facility.

Following are some ways you can help reduce pollution into local rivers.

### Install a Rain Garden

Rain gardens are gardens that soak up rain water— from your roof, driveway and/or lawn. They are landscaped areas planted to wild flowers and other native vegetation to replace areas of lawn. The garden's low areas fill with a few inches of water, allowing rain water to slowly filter into the ground rather than running off to storm drains. This allows about 30 percent more water to soak into the ground than a conventional lawn.

#### *Rain Garden Benefits*

- ⇒ Increase the amount of water filtering into the ground which recharges groundwater and helps reduce the amount of pollutants washing off to lakes and streams.
- ⇒ Provides wildlife habitat.
- ⇒ Enhances the beauty of your yard and the neighborhood.
- ⇒ Helps protect communities from flooding and drainage problems.
- ⇒ Helps protect rivers and lakes from damaging flows and reduces erosion of riverbanks and lakeshores.

### Use Rain Barrels

A rain barrel is a rainwater harvesting system that is connected to a down spout from a house or building. There are many types of rain barrels from simple to ones with whistles-and-bells. Water collected in rain barrels can be used in gardens and on lawns and prevent excessive runoff.

Rain barrels do more than catch rainwater. While collecting water from the downspout these barrels also

- ⇒ divert water from the municipal storm drain system
- ⇒ protect local rivers from runoff pollution
- ⇒ control moisture levels around the foundation of your home
- ⇒ provide oxygenated, un-chlorinated water ideal for plants
- ⇒ direct overflow water to where you want it
- ⇒ save you money
- ⇒ conserve a vital natural resource

### Consider Xeriscaping

Xeriscaping is a form of landscaping using drought tolerant plants to reduce the need for supplemental watering. It is fast becoming one of the hottest trends on the home gardening front.

Xeriscaping provides many attractive planting options, presents minimal pest and disease problems and requires low maintenance.

#### *Xeriscaping Tips*

- ⇒ Use plants that are native and well-adapted to the area.
- ⇒ Plant trees, shrubs and flowers which require less water.
- ⇒ Consider making a rock garden using big rocks and boulders.
- ⇒ Use mulch to moderate soil temperatures and conserve moisture.



**Remember!**  
Any substance or material that enters a storm drain goes directly to a river. Never dump anything in a storm drain!

## What can YOU do?

- Compost yard waste instead of sweeping it into the street.
- Use pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers only in amount needed.
- Do not overwater your lawn.
- Select native plants and grass which require less water, fertilizer and pesticides.
- Reduce paved area and increase the vegetated area in your yard.
- Install a rain garden.
- Use zero-phosphorus fertilizer.
- Direct downspouts onto your lawn or landscaping, not onto hard surfaces.
- Pick up pet waste.
- Repair car leaks and dispose of fluids and waste at designated drop-off or recycling locations.
- Wash car on a lawn or other unpaved surface.
- Clean paint brushes in a sink.



**For more information go to  
[www.riverkeepers.org](http://www.riverkeepers.org) or call 701-235-2895.**