



# know your WATERSHED

## **WHAT IS A WATERSHED?**

A watershed is an area of land that drains to a common body of water, such as a nearby creek, stream, river or lake. For example, when it rains, all the water from a small watershed may travel to a local creek. That creek will flow into a larger stream, such as Brush Creek, which in turn collects water from an even larger watershed. Brush Creek flows into the Blue River, which then deposits water into the Missouri River. We all live in a watershed.

## **WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?**

During the construction of homes, roads and office buildings, vegetation is often removed and replaced by large paved areas. These areas keep rain from soaking into the soil and increase the speed and amount of water that rushes down gutters and into storm drains during a rain storm. This stormwater runoff picks up pollutants from roads, including lawn chemicals, pet waste, litter and eroded soil before flowing to rivers, lakes and streams, **untreated**. This has lasting health, safety, environmental and economic impacts on our watersheds and communities.

Watersheds support a wide variety of plants and wildlife and provide outdoor recreation opportunities for residents. Protecting the health of our watersheds can preserve and enhance the quality of life for Kansas City residents as well as those living downstream.

## **WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MY WATERSHED?**

- Landscape with native plants
- Conserve rain water on your property
- Never discard trash or yard waste down storm drains, in the street or in streams.
- Properly dispose of pet waste.
- Use lawn chemicals safely.
- Do not wash cars on driveways or in the street.

For more tips on how you can improve  
water quality in your community, visit  
[www.marc.org/water](http://www.marc.org/water).



**Clean Water. Healthy Life.**  
Regional Water Quality Education Program