

## Fall 2017 Newsletter

### The Main Source of Local Water Pollution? It's Something We Can All Help Reduce

By Lisa Stuart

The number one cause of pollution in our local waterways today is storm water runoff, which we can all help decrease, starting in our own backyards. As land development for residential and business uses increases, more and more open space is covered with lawns and impermeable surfaces like buildings, driveways, parking lots and roads. In rainstorms, runoff travels across these surfaces picking up contaminants such as fertilizers, pesticides, oils and gasoline that then wash directly into the Norwalk River, its tributaries and ultimately Long Island Sound. Development that does not properly plan for runoff threatens water quality in our rivers as well as area wells.

Residents can take action in their own yards and by adding their voices to the call in their towns and statewide for smart development that requires rain gardens, permeable paving and storm water treatment systems. At home, consider unhooking downspouts that connect to the town drainage system and installing a rain garden to help the water penetrate deeply into the earth. Decreasing the amount of lawn and increasing the native trees, bushes and other plantings around your home is another way to help. These longer-rooted plants filter water and help recharge aquifers that feed wells and reservoirs.



Photograph courtesy of Louise Washer

***At Merwin Meadows in Wilton, above, storm water runoff is channeled directly into the Norwalk River bringing with it contaminants from the parking lot such as oils and gasoline from cars.***

**Need help assessing your property to see how you can reduce storm water runoff?  
Please contact us at [info@norwalkriver.org](mailto:info@norwalkriver.org).**



**Thanks to Everyone Who Came to the Butterfly Walk Along the Pollinator Pathway at Keeler's Ridge Meadow in Wilton!**

