

News



MARIA BESSO PHOTO

Franz (left), Petra, and Sarah Wohlgemuth, help plant the new bioswale at Creekside Park in Coldstream as part of River's Day celebrations. The bioswale is designed to catch and divert storm water, and naturally filter it before it runs into Coldstream Creek.

FUTURE SHOP - Correction Notice

Please note that this dishwasher found on pg 20 of the Oct 28 flyer was incorrectly advertised as part of the KitchenAid Stainless Appliance Package (with 10172505/10169198) & was priced separately at \$799.99. The correct dishwasher included in this package should be the KitchenAid KUDDC10FXSS model (10162814), priced separately at \$799.99. Customers can purchase the previously advertised KUDE60HXSS dishwasher separately for the regular price of \$1699.99. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused our valued customers.

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Storm water requires diverse approach

TRINA KOCH

Special to The Morning Star

As the Okanagan's rainy season approaches, it's a good time to talk storm water.

Ever wonder what happens to water once it gurgles down the storm drain in front of your house?

Many people, especially those growing up before the days of yellow fish painted beside storm sewers, probably never gave it much thought. In fact, that storm drain was, and still is for some, a handy method of getting rid of water used to wash off driveways, cars, paintbrushes and more. And what about all that oily rainwater flowing down the road and into the storm drain? Surely, all this run-off must go to the treatment plant right?

Actually, no. Water and everything else that enters municipal storm drains in the Okanagan, flows directly into our creeks and lakes - without treatment. Of course, these creeks and lakes are also home to local fish and other aquatic creatures, provide water for wildlife and drinking water for many residents.

Pollutants in storm water can hurt water quality and result in health risks to humans and wildlife.

In a number of Okanagan communities, local governments and residents are working together to ensure the water that enters the storm sewers, and ultimately our creeks and lakes, is as clean as possible.

A number of communities are building bioswales and restoring wetlands, which clean storm water by naturally filtering the water through vegetation. And vegetation is also being planted to stabilize slopes. For

example, Coldstream has taken some initial steps in storm water treatment by building a bioswale and planting riparian plants at Creekside Park.

Many residents are also doing their part to keep our storm water clean. Here are a few ideas:

- Install rain barrels, down spout flash guards or rain chains to direct and collect rainwater for re-use in your garden.

- Paver stones, used in the construction of walkways and driveways, allow rainwater to sink into the spaces between stones and into the ground. On an asphalt driveway, an asphalt berm, known as a waterbar (like a little speed bump) can be added to slow and spread run-off to vegetated or mulched (wood or gravel) areas.

- If you need to wash your vehicle, do it at a car wash that recycles its water and treats it before returning it to the environment. If you must give your vehicle a quick wash at home, do it on the lawn. The lawn will act as a natural filter that removes many of the chemicals before the water makes its way back to our streams and lakes.

- Dispose of hazardous materials at appropriate disposal locations.

- Remove pet waste from your property to prevent it from washing into the nearest storm drain.

For more ideas around your home, check out the OBWB's new, *Slow it. Spread it. Sink it: An Okanagan Homeowner's Guide to Using Rain as a Resource*. The guide is available online, at www.okwaterwise.ca.

Trina Koch is with the Okanagan Basin Board's Slow It. Spread It. Sink It committee.

Okanagan WaterWise is an initiative of the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

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