

Austin guide to... **CREEKSIDE HOMES**

If you live along a creek or lake, rainwater or irrigation runoff will flow from your land directly into the water. This runoff carries excess chemicals, loose dirt and trash with it.



How Can You Help?

Keep Water on the Land:

- **Replace turf with native and adapted trees, shrubs and groundcovers to create a 10' buffer zone along the water. This will:**
 - **reduce runoff**
 - **filter pollutants**
 - **prevent erosion**
 - **increase water penetration into the soil**
 - **provide shade which benefits aquatic life**
- **Build terraces or a retaining wall uphill from the waterway to stabilize steep slopes**
- **Till vegetable rows across a slope rather than up and down**
- **Use permeable surfaces like mulch or wood decking for pathways and patios to allow rain to soak into the ground**

Organize a creek cleanup. Contact Keep Austin Beautiful at 512-391-0617 for cleanup supplies

Visit www.growgreen.org
for all your earth-wise gardening tips

Reduce Landscaping Chemicals:

- **Don't bag your grass clippings in order to return nutrients and beneficial organic matter to the soil naturally – this allows you to use half as much fertilizer, half as often as listed on the bag**
- **Choose natural or organic fertilizers – they leach less nutrients to our groundwater than chemical fertilizers**
- **Avoid using synthetic weed and feed products:**
 - **The best time to use a fertilizer is NOT usually the best time to apply a weed killer**
 - **Spreading an herbicide over the entire lawn is generally excessive**
- **Use pesticides as a last resort, and only after you have identified the problem correctly**
- **Never apply chemicals before a rain – rainwater can wash pollutants straight into the waterway**

Trash and Chemicals

- **Clean up trash along the creek – it can harm habitats for aquatic life**
- **Store chemicals in cool, secure, dry areas away from the creek**

Bacteria

- **Scoop the Poop to prevent bacteria from entering the water**
- **If you own a septic tank, inspect it annually**

www.austintexas.gov/watershed



512-974-2550