

## Did you know that the streams, creeks and rivers in your neighborhood are all connected by one “watershed?”



A watershed is a region of land where rain, snow, litter and unfortunately, even trash collects and runs into one larger water source.

An easy way to understand a watershed is to think of it like a bathtub: imagine that the bathtub is the watershed and the drain is the river. Any water that falls inside the tub (the watershed) will eventually go down the drain (or, river) carrying dirt and soap with it. The sides of the tub are like mountains and hills that keep the water from ending up on the floor (or, in other watersheds).

Our “bathtub” has a name: the Potomac River Watershed. Trash and litter found along the shores of the Potomac River – our “drain” - comes from streets, backyards, playgrounds and other sources. This trash carries with it harmful toxins, which put the river’s wildlife in danger and can be bad for your family’s health.

### Are we drinking our bath water?!

Did you know that 80% of the people in the region get their drinking water from the Potomac River? This means that the yucky litter found in our watershed is in the same water that eventually comes out of your faucet. For instance, in April 2010, a cleanup of the Potomac River found:

- 503,800 *pounds of trash*
- 21,597 *plastic bags*
- 14,802 *cigarette butts*

