

THREATS TO CORAL REEFS LAND-BASED SOURCES OF POLLUTION

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Apply fertilizers and pesticides sparingly.
- Pick up after your pets.
- Wash your car on your lawn.
- Dispose of lawn clippings in a compost pile.
- Harvest rooftop rain water through rain barrels or rain gardens.
- DO NOT dump paint, oil, antifreeze, debris, or other household chemicals into street gutters or storm drains.
- Clean up spilled brake fluid, oil, grease, and antifreeze.
- Maintain proper septic system function with inspections and pumpouts every 3-5 years.
- Seek shade between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., use Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF) sunwear, and choose sunscreens with chemicals that don't harm marine life. For more information, visit oceanservice.noaa.gov/sunscreens.

POLLUTION
sedimentation
toxins
pathogens
increased nutrients

causes disease and mortality
disrupts ecological functions
changes dynamics and feeding behaviors
prevents coral growth and reproduction

As human population & development expands in coastal areas, the landscape is altered, increasing land-based sources of pollution & **THREATENING CORAL REEF HEALTH.**

As human population and development expands in coastal areas, the landscape is altered, increasing land-based sources of pollution and threatening coral reef health. [Download this infographic \(/facts/coral-pollution.pdf\)](#) | [Infographic Text](#)

Impacts from land-based sources of pollution—including coastal development, deforestation, agricultural runoff, and oil and chemical spills—can impede coral growth and reproduction, disrupt overall ecological function, and cause disease and mortality in sensitive species. It is now well accepted that many serious coral reef ecosystem stressors originate from land-based sources, most notably toxicants, sediments, and nutrients.

Within the U.S., there are numerous locations where coral reef ecosystems are highly impacted by watershed alteration, runoff, and coastal development. On U.S. islands in the Pacific and Caribbean, significant changes in the drainage basins due to agriculture, deforestation, grazing of feral animals, fires, road building, and urbanization have increased the volume of land-based pollution released to adjacent coral reef ecosystems.