Threats to Coral Reefs

Land-Based Sources of Pollution

- Coastal development & impervious surface
- Stormwater runoff
- Deforestation
- Oil and chemical spills
- Road construction
- Agriculture

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.

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/sunscreen.