



BELIEVE IT OR NOT,
ONE OF THE BIGGEST THREATS TO
OUR WATER QUALITY IS PLAIN OLD
DIRT WASHING INTO OUR RIVERS,
LAKES AND STREAMS FROM LAWNS,
ROADS, DRIVEWAYS AND
CONSTRUCTION SITES.



Top soil is an important resource for your yard. However when the soil is lost through erosion it becomes a pollutant called "**sediment**". Water flowing from your yard during rain or snow melt carries sediments (and the pollutants that attach to sediments) to our local streams and ultimately Lake Superior.



WHAT'S WRONG WITH SEDIMENT?

Sediment clouds water and reduces sunlight for the stream plants that provide habitat and oxygen for fish. Sediments fill in the spaces between rocks in stream bottoms and take away fish spawning habitat and habitat for critters that live on the bottom.

Sediments also carry other pollutants such as nutrients, oil and grease. Excess nutrients in water lead to nuisance algae growth.

SIGNS OF EROSION INCLUDE:

- Exposed tree roots, stones and rocks
- Formation of small gullies.
- Buildup of soil in low areas
- Widening or deepening stream channels.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT EROSION?

1. Seed or mulch any bare soil on your land. Plant roots guard soil from rain drops and prevent erosion.
2. Choose perennials, shrubs and trees that thrive in your soil or climate. Native plants have deeper root systems that protect soil from erosion. Check with a local nursery for information.
3. Direct downspouts onto grass or gardens.
4. Stabilize hills with trees or other plants.
5. Only garden on level areas of your property.
6. Cover gardens with mulch or leaves over winter to protect plants and reduce erosion when snow melts.
7. Plant shrubs or trees to create a buffer between your property and any lake or stream. Buffers filter out pollutants.
8. Set up erosion controls when doing small construction projects. For more information contact the Stormwater Utility or City Engineering.
9. For larger construction projects contact City Engineering at 730-5200 and the MPCA for erosion control and permit requirements.

If you observe erosion at construction sites or on stream banks, contact the Stormwater Utility at 730-4130. A Utility staff member will visit the site and evaluate needed actions.