

Clean Water Starts with Me

The [Mill River Wetland Committee](#) has a simple mission: to educate the community about the value of watersheds, to advocate for their continued protection, and to engage all people in the fight to protect our environment.

I Pledge to Protect My Watershed

No matter where you live, you live in a [watershed](#), and we need to protect them. I commit to taking as many of the following steps to protect our local water resources as I can. I realize doing this protects the watershed as well as saves me time and money.

In maintaining my lawn, gardens, and landscape, I will... (pick at least 2)

- Plant native trees, shrubs, and limit lawn areas. I will plant or allow natural buffers to grow at the edges of streams and wetlands. [Learn about native plants, what's special about them, and where to buy them.](#)
- NOT use chemical fertilizer – I'll [test my soil](#) to understand how to amend it for the what I'm using it for and use compost to add nutrients.
- NOT use chemical pesticides or insecticides– I'll find out what the pest is and on which plants, and find a natural fix – the [UConn Extension Office](#) can help me figure this out.
- [Mow my lawn so it's at least 3" tall and leave the clippings as mulch.](#) I understand that lawns are a cool weather plant and it is normal that they are brown in the heat of summer. Better yet – plant native grasses that require less care! I'll learn more [here](#).
- Appreciate that [plants need 1" of water per week](#) and will only water if nature has not provided this.
- Create places for the water to soak into the ground. I will increase the organic matter in my soil and use mulch to help it absorb and retain moisture longer, swales or [rain gardens](#) to [manage stormwater](#), limit paved areas and will use [pervious materials](#) when possible for patios, driveways, and walkways.

In maintaining other areas around my home, I will... (pick at least 2)

- Have my septic system pumped out at least every 3 years. [Learn how a septic system works.](#)
- Compost my veggies - [learn how to compost](#) or contact [Curbside Compost](#) to pick it up.
- Fix leaky faucets; 2,700 gallons of water can be wasted annually by a leaky faucet dripping only one drop per second!
- Buy [water-efficient appliances and fixtures.](#)
- Use non-toxic cleaners, [learn how to make your own green cleaners yourself.](#)
- Use ["green" building materials](#) in my home.
- Learn [how to dispose of unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medications.](#)