



COBBS CREEK OUTDOORS & MORE

THE POLLUTION PIPELINE FROM OUR STREETS TO OUR STREAMS



In West and Southwest Philadelphia, Cobbs Creek is more than a waterway, it's a lifeline for local wildlife and a cherished green space for our community. But its health is under threat from an often overlooked source: **non-point source pollution**, pollution that comes from many diffuse sources, especially stormwater runoff. When it rains, water flows over hard surfaces like streets, sidewalks, and parking lots, picking up oil, grease, heavy metals, and debris along the way. This polluted runoff enters storm drains, which don't lead to treatment plants, but directly into our creeks and rivers including Cobbs Creek, the Schuylkill, and ultimately the Delaware River.

Improper disposal of toxic fluids is a major contributor. Some residents pour used motor oil, transmission fluid, or coolant into storm drains or gutters, not realizing the long-term ecological damage. Often after a home improvement project paint and paint thinner is dumped into the drains on the block. *Just one gallon of oil can contaminate up to one million gallons of water.* These substances are **hydrocarbons** and **glycols** dangerous chemicals that poison aquatic life, reduce oxygen levels in the water, and disrupt ecosystems. Fish, frogs, and birds suffer, and so does the biodiversity of our watershed.

Cobbs Creek already faces **eutrophication**, the overgrowth of algae from excess nutrients like lawn fertilizer runoff which blocks sunlight and depletes oxygen for native animals. Not only do pollutants impact how safe our neighborhoods are and how drinkable our water is, the concerns extend to our waterways and the wildlife that life there.



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ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT STREET MECHANICS?

Many neighbors are concerned about the safety and pollution hazards in the parking lot at 70th and Elmwood Avenue (6930 Elmwood Avenue). While it is the topic at many community meetings, the issue persists. Here are some helpful tips if you'd like to voice your concern:

City code requires that parking lots only be used for parking cars. It is illegal to do auto repair in a public parking lot. If you are concerned about the large amount of autowork being done in Elmwood Park Plaza, you need to call the **Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I)**.

Southwest Philadelphia is in L&I's South District and you can reach their code enforcement office here:

South District

Code Enforcement Unit

2401 Walnut St., Suite 502

Philadelphia, PA 19103

(215) 685-1510

All you need to say is that you use **Elmwood Park Plaza** and the amount of autowork happening in the parking lot is creating a dangerous situation for you.

Large piles of empty motor oil containers can often be found in the parking lot along with other waste materials related to automotive repair. The open storage of these materials creates a significant fire hazard while also creating a dangerous environment where individuals may slip and fall. Feel free to call Council President Johnson to let his office know that you've reported a violation to L&I.

Call Council President Johnson at (215) 686-3412 or (215) 686-3413

Please reach out to **Russell Zerbo** at rzerbo@cleanair.org or 215-567-4004 x130 with any questions.

Parked vehicles without license plates are considered a nuisance. Report them to the **Philadelphia Parking Authority** at 215-683-9773 or philapark.org/nuisance





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UPCOMING EVENTS

Original American Foundation's First Annual Fund Raiser

Join us as we kick off our first ever fund raiser! We planned an exciting day of food, seed planting, raised bed building, water ice, Soul Smoothies, music, projector screen, horse back rides, a live auction every hour and more!



Check out our beautiful green space and have fun! 1837 S Allison St! Aug/2/2025 12pm-7pm. Can't join us on this date? Please donate at [Oamerican on cash app](#)! Plus there will be more fund raisers and activities to come. Hope to see everyone there.



Keep updated on Cobbs Creek events by following the Cobbs Creek Watershed Coalition on Facebook and Instagram



COBBS CREEK ART CLUB

Wednesdays 5:30-7:30pm

Free artmaking workshops for adults and families

June 25th
July 2nd
July 16th
July 30th
August 13th
August 27th
September 10th
September 24th

snacks provided

@ Cobbs Creek Community Environmental Center
63rd and Catharine Streets (down the hill)

SUMMER FUN FOR KIDS!

NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

 LEAF	 BUTTERFLY	 ROCK	 TRACKS	 WATER
 SNAIL	 GRASS	 MUSHROOM	 FEATHER	 BEE
 BIRD	 LADYBUG	 STICK	 WORM	 TREE
 PINE CONE	 MOSS	 FLOWER	 SQUIRREL	 ANT
 CLOUD	 NEST	 SPIDERWEB	 DIRT	 CLOVER