WHY IS THIS ISSUE IMPORTANT
Contaminants in urban stormwater are impairing water quality and impacting salmon survival and health; yet, the identity of these toxic pollutants remains mostly unknown. Robust analytical methods are needed to identify and track these toxic pollutants in regional watersheds and Puget Sound so we can build effective stormwater treatment systems to protect ecosystem health.

WHAT YOU CAN DO
Residential areas are large sources of pollutants to our watersheds. How can you help reduce pollutant flows to our local waters? Limit or stop chemical use around your home and yard, prevent chemical discharge to storm drains, and keep your car well maintained to prevent fluid leaks. Use less.

ABOUT CENTER FOR URBAN WATERS
The Center for Urban Waters (CUW) is a community of environmental scientists, engineers, and policy makers developing sustainable solutions to restore and protect the Puget Sound. The University of Washington Tacoma houses an organized research unit at the CUW, enabling collaboration of UW with CUW partner organizations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
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DEVELOPMENT OF CHEMICAL INDICATORS TO DETECT, TRACK AND ASSESS TREATMENT OF NOVEL AND EMERGING TOXIC STORMWATER POLLUTANTS
This project aims to improve water quality in regional watersheds, especially those highly impacted by urban stormwater runoff, by identifying and quantifying chemical toxics in stormwater that both impair water quality and adversely affect salmonid health.

What we’re doing
This project will: 1) develop and validate an analytical method for the detection and quantification of a suite of chemicals with high ecotoxicological relevance; 2) survey regional stormwaters and watershed systems for select salmonid toxicants; and 3) sample stormwater treatment systems to evaluate their relative performance to remove key toxics and improve water quality.

How we’re doing it
In collaboration with ongoing efforts by NOAA and WSU-Puyallup, we use advanced mass spectrometry to study urban stormwater and receiving waters to identify chemical toxics linked to salmon mortality and optimize stormwater treatment systems to improve water quality.