

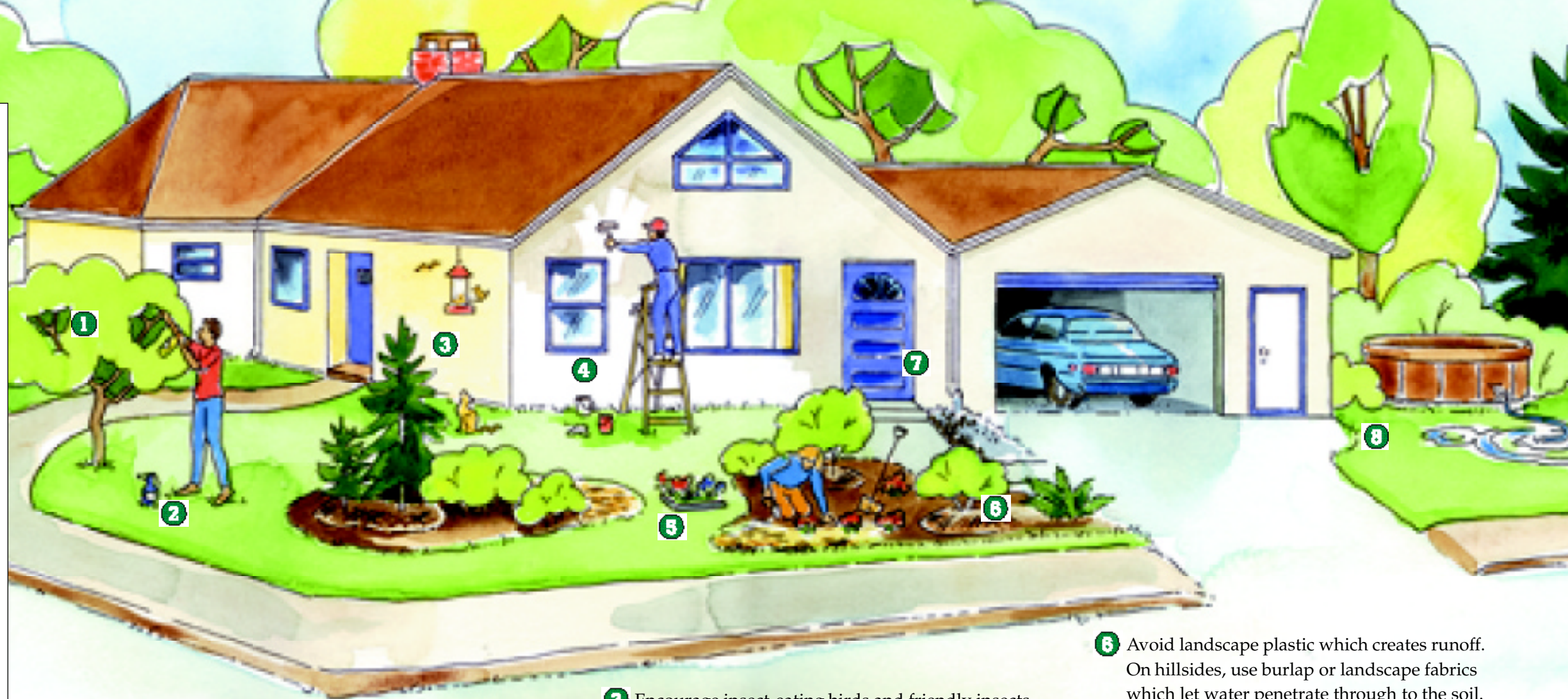
## The Problem

When urban development covers the land with buildings, concrete and asphalt, less rain soaks into the soil. The water stays on the surface and runs off quickly into streams, ditches and storm drains, which also empty into streams. The result is "urban runoff."

Urban runoff can pollute streams. The runoff water collects litter, oil, gas, fertilizer, pesticides and anything else that will float or dissolve. These untreated pollutants flow directly into streams through ditches or storm drains.

### Remember:

Under the *Fisheries Act*, it is unlawful to harmfully alter the habitat of a fish-bearing stream or add deleterious substances to its waters.



## Lawn and Garden Tips

Weed killers and other pesticides can also kill animals, plants and beneficial insects. Fertilizer runoff causes excess weed and algae growth in streams which reduces the available oxygen for fish and other aquatic life.

- 1 Instead of weed killers and other pesticides, consider hand-pulling weeds and using insecticidal soap.
- 2 If you must use chemicals do not over apply. Use specific spot treatments rather than general broadcast herbicides. Never spray near ditches, lakes or streams. Spray on windless days and not before or during rain.

- 3 Encourage insect-eating birds and friendly insects. Useful insects are spiders, ladybugs and lacewings that eat pest insects. Attract birds with tree cover, food during the winter and protection from cats.
- 4 Dispose of unused paint and chemicals correctly. Never dump into household toilets and sinks or outside ditches, storm drains or streams. Follow guidelines for disposal or recycling from the B.C. Ministry of Environment, Waste Management Branch.
- 5 Use straw, leaves, or grass clippings to keep down weeds and insulate the soil. Limit use of bark mulch near streams and storm drains, because it leaches toxins.

- 6 Avoid landscape plastic which creates runoff. On hillsides, use burlap or landscape fabrics which let water penetrate through to the soil.
- 7 If possible, redirect roof downspouts away from drain tiles and street storm drains. Gravel drain systems filter and slowly release rain into the groundwater stores, which later enter streams.

## Hot Tub and Pool Tips

- Chemicals such as chlorine are very toxic to fish and animals.
- 8 When draining hot tubs or pools, direct the water slowly into the ground or sewer system. Never drain water into streets and storm drains.