



Keep our Lakes & Rivers Clean

Anything that enters our storm drains goes to the Minnesota River! Our City storm drains carry runoff water to our lakes and rivers which contains materials that wash off yards and streets and can pollute these bodies of water.

What we do on our property affects the quality of our water.

The following are ways you can contribute to keeping our lakes and rivers clean.



- **Rake leaves, seeds and grass clippings out of the street and gutter**

Leaves and lawn clippings are a major source of phosphorus which causes increased algae growth in lakes and streams. Too much algae can block sunlight and prevent other plants from growing. When algae dies and decays, it also takes needed oxygen away from fish.

To participate in the City Fall Leaf Collection, rake your leaves onto the grass boulevard. See the schedule printed in this newsletter for the week the City will be picking up in your neighborhood. The City will not pick up your leaves if they are in plastic bags. You may bag your leaves and take them to the Recycling Center.

- **Fertilizer Use.**

Choose a zero-phosphorus fertilizer unless you are establishing a new lawn or a soil test shows need for phosphorus fertilization. This is a Minnesota Law. If you think your lawn needs phosphorus, test your soil first. Call INFO-U at 612-624-2200, message 468 or visit soiltest.coafes.umn.edu.



- **Keep the pavement clean.** Sweep up grass clippings, soil and fertilizer from driveways, sidewalks and streets. When mowing, direct the discharge chute towards the lawn and away from paved areas. Remember to sweep up when the mowing job is done!

- **Prevent Erosion.** Control soil erosion around your house. When soil is left bare, rain water will run quickly over it picking up soil particles which have phosphorus attached to them. To prevent soil in stormwater runoff entering the storm sewer, keep soil from washing into the street.



- **Washing your vehicle.** Using a commercial car wash is the best way to avoid contaminates such as oil, grease, metals, detergents and phosphorus entering our water systems. If you choose to wash your vehicle at home, wash it on gravel or other permeable surfaces that soak up water such as your lawn. Choose a biodegradable and phosphate-free soap. Use a hose nozzle with a trigger to save water. Pour your bucket of wash water onto the lawn or down

the sink when you're done, not onto the driveway or street.



- **Clean up after pets.** Pet waste contains phosphorus as well as harmful bacteria. The City Code specifies the following: "The owner of any animal or person having custody or control of any animal shall be responsible for cleaning up any feces of the animal and disposing of the feces in a sanitary manner whether on their own property, on the property of others or on public property." Violation of these code provisions is a misdemeanor and is subject to the penalties set forth by statute.



- **Don't Dump.** Do not pour chemicals of any kind into storm sewer drains. Dispose of leftover paints, oils, cleaners & hazardous materials in a safe and proper way by taking them to the Blue Earth County Regional Household Hazardous Waste facility at 651 Summit Avenue in Mankato.