



Stormwater Utility Newsletter

Working together to improve water quality and protect your property

Leaves — An Unexpected Source of Pollution

Fall 2004—Issue 3

You probably don't realize it, but you live on "waterfront property." In fact, most everyone in Sun Prairie lives on a lake or stream when it comes to stormwater runoff.

That's because the distance between your yard and the water's edge is as close as the nearest storm drain or ditch.

So, an easy way that you can help clean the lakes and streams is to keep leaves and other debris out of gutters and ditches.

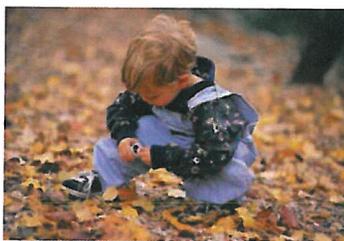
In wooded areas and grassy fields, rainwater and melting snow soak into the

ground, as nature intended. Leaves generally decompose where they fall.

But in urban areas like Sun Prairie, these "pervious" surfaces have been paved over so that rainwater gushes down our sidewalks and streets, delivering the leaves along with dirt, oil, fertilizers, grass clippings, and garbage into the storm drainage system and eventually into the Koshkonong Creek, Token Creek, or Maunasha River.

So, a big source of water pollution today actually comes from **you and me**.

Individually, we contribute



Pretty, but pretty damaging

little pollution. Collectively, our urban households have a damaging effect on Sun Prairie's creeks and Dane County's lakes and streams through simple neglect and lack of awareness.

What can you do? A lot! **Flip this over to learn some simple solutions.**

"Urban stormwater is one of the most significant sources of pollution in our nation's rivers, lakes and estuaries. The solution is simple: to keep it out of the lakes and streams, you've got to keep it out of the streets, gutters, and ditches."

Check out our website



To learn more about the many small steps you can take around your home to reduce stormwater pollution, visit the city's website:

www.cityofsunprairie.com
(Engineering Section)

Or the Clearwater Campaign
www.clearwatercampaign.com

Stormwater Drains *Directly* Into Our Lakes and Streams

Contrary to what many people believe, the water that goes into the storm drainage system, including ditches, is **not** treated at wastewater treatment plants.

Rather, it drains *directly* into our lakes and streams. And most folks don't realize that leaves can be a nagging source of local water pollution.

In autumn, leaves make their way into our lakes and streams when rain washes



them down the storm drains and ditches. Once they get into the water, the leaves release nutrients that contribute to the accelerated growth of algae.

The result is a greenish-tinted lake choked with foul smelling, dying algae that can kill fish and other aquatic critters and generally make water recreation an unpleasant experience.

So this autumn, **follow the simple guidelines on page 2**, and keep leaves out of the water by keeping them out of streets, gutters and ditches.





What Can I Do About Stormwater Pollution?

Inevitably, some leaves will get into the water regardless of what we do to stop them, but we can prevent much of the pollution by following these simple water-friendly practices.

Compost: Adding leaves to a compost pile creates an inexpensive and nutrient-rich fertilizer for your vegetable and flower gardens. Composting allows us to imitate and reap the rewards of the natural recycling process.

Check out <http://clean-water.uwex.edu/pubs/stewards/Y013.pdf> for more information on composting.

Till: You can till leaves directly into a gar-

den, contributing valuable organic matter.

Mulch: If you have a mulching mower, you can chop the leaves into small particles that will decompose directly into your lawn. If you have a bagger on your mulching mower, you can use the leaves to mulch flowerbeds and shrubs.

Rake: Rake leaves for curbside pickup. If you do, collect the leaves in a bag or a returnable refuse container. Raked leaves in containers are collected twice in the fall.

You may also transport leaves to the Recycle Center, located at 1798 South Bird Street.



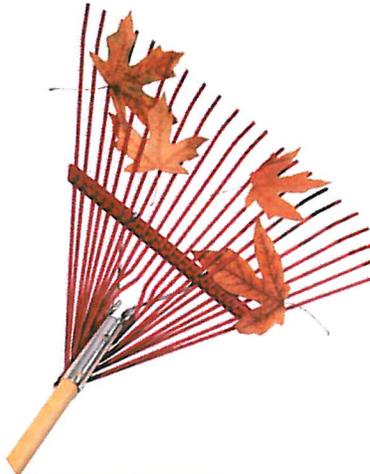
Fall Yard Waste Collection Schedule

For residents with Wednesday or Friday garbage collection:

Set materials curbside by 7 a.m. on Monday, November 1, or Monday, November 15, in plastic bags or returnable refuse containers with the lids removed.

For residents with Monday, Tuesday, or Thursday garbage collection:

Set materials curbside on Monday, October 25, or Monday, November 8, in plastic bags or returnable refuse containers with the lids removed.



Sun Prairie Recycle Center Hours

Brush and yard waste are accepted at the Recycle Center during regular hours.

Fall hours: October 18 to December 4

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday:
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday: 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday, and
Holidays: CLOSED



CITY OF SUN PRAIRIE
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SUN PRAIRIE, WI 53590
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