

## More Spring Pollution Reduction Tips & Information

Spring is nearly here and people are anxious to get outside and enjoy the great outdoors - but with the warmer temperatures and spring rain comes new pollution hazards. Please keep the following information in mind...

**Pet Waste:** Pet waste contains excessive nutrients and bacteria, which are harmful to plants, animals and humans. **ALWAYS** bag your pet waste and dispose of properly - never leave pet waste on lawns, trails or public areas!

**Auto Care:** Changing your own oil? Got leaks? Not sure what to do with leftover automotive fluids? Clean up spills and leaks immediately - **NEVER** wash automotive fluids into storm drains. Take leftover or used antifreeze and oil to the Loudoun County Landfill to be recycled at no cost!

**Spring Cleanup:** When cleaning up the house or adding a fresh coat of paint, be sure to dispose of chemicals and paints properly. They should never be allowed to be washed into storm drains! Take chemicals to a local hazardous waste collection event and wash paint brushes and trays inside!

For more information on volunteering and education outreach programs, please contact Nathaniel Ogedegbe, Stormwater Manager, at 703-771-2790 or e-mail [nogedegbe@leesburgva.gov](mailto:nogedegbe@leesburgva.gov). You may also visit [www.leesburgva.gov/publicworks/waterquality](http://www.leesburgva.gov/publicworks/waterquality) for more information on our programs.

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## Living Green A Citizen's Guide to Springtime Stormwater Pollution Prevention



Town of Leesburg  
Stormwater Management &  
Water Quality Program

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## Your Yard & Stormwater Pollution



Water quality is an important issue that affects us all. We all want clean, safe water for our communities. While businesses and commercial enterprises have their roles, so do homeowners and private citizens. We are all responsible for taking steps to prevent pollution from entering our waterways - this prevention starts at **HOME!**

Did you know your yard can be a source of stormwater pollution? Rainwater carries leaves, grass clipping, pesticides and fertilizers into the storm drain system where it flows **untreated** to streams and creeks. The excessive nutrients from leaves and grass clippings washed down storm drains can cause algae blooms that reduce oxygen levels in water and can harm aquatic plants and wildlife!

## What Can You Do to Help?

Homeowners can take simple steps to reduce the pollutants from being carried by stormwater into streams and ponds. These are low-cost or no-cost changes you can do to make a difference in the water quality in our communities!



## Leaves & Grass Clippings

**Grass Clippings: NEVER** sweep or wash grass clippings into streets or storm sewers. Grass takes a long time to decompose - clippings can clog storm drains and sewers causing backups and flooding. In addition, clippings contain nitrogen and other nutrients, which can harm the natural balance in waterways. Instead you can:

- Bag clippings to be recycled - use brown paper yard waste bags for grass and other lawn waste.
- Use a mulching mower and leave clippings on the lawn - grass clippings left on the lawn can provide up to 25% of your lawn's fertilizer needs.
- Use clippings in a compost pile - the nitrogen in grass clippings will speed up the microbial process.

**Leaves: NEVER** sweep or wash leaves into sewers or storm drains. Like grass, leaves take time to decompose and can clog drains and outlets, causing backups and flooding. Instead:

- Bag leaves for recycling or look for dates when the town provides bulk leaf collection with the vacuum truck.
- Use leaves in compost piles to add dry material.

## Lawn & Garden Care Tips

**Erosion Control:** Bare spots in your lawn and garden can cause soil and sediment to wash into storm drains and choke out natural vegetation and aquatic life.

**Watering:** Make sure sprinklers and hoses direct water onto the lawn and garden - not onto sidewalks and driveways, where water can pick up pollutants and sediments and carry them into storm sewers.



 **Turf Selection:** Choosing the right grass can make a big difference in the quality of your yard. In Virginia, Kentucky Bluegrass and Tall Fescue or mixtures of the two are good varieties for our region.

**Fertilizers:** Based on your soil test, use only the amount and type needed for your lawn and garden.

**Soil Testing:** Use a soil test to determine what type of fertilizer or soil amendments are right for your lawn and garden.

**Composting:** Use grass clippings and leaves in a compost pile - the nutrients in the cut grass, when mixed with other organic materials such as leaves, help to form a beneficial compost which can improve soil quality in your lawn and garden.

Did you know the Town of Leesburg provides **FREE** collection of yard waste every week? Grass clippings, weeds, small twigs and leaves can be placed in brown paper yard waste bags or loose in cans with a "Yard Waste" sticker from the town for pickup on your recycling day. To get a free sticker, please call 703-771-2790 or e-mail [trash@leesburgva.gov](mailto:trash@leesburgva.gov).