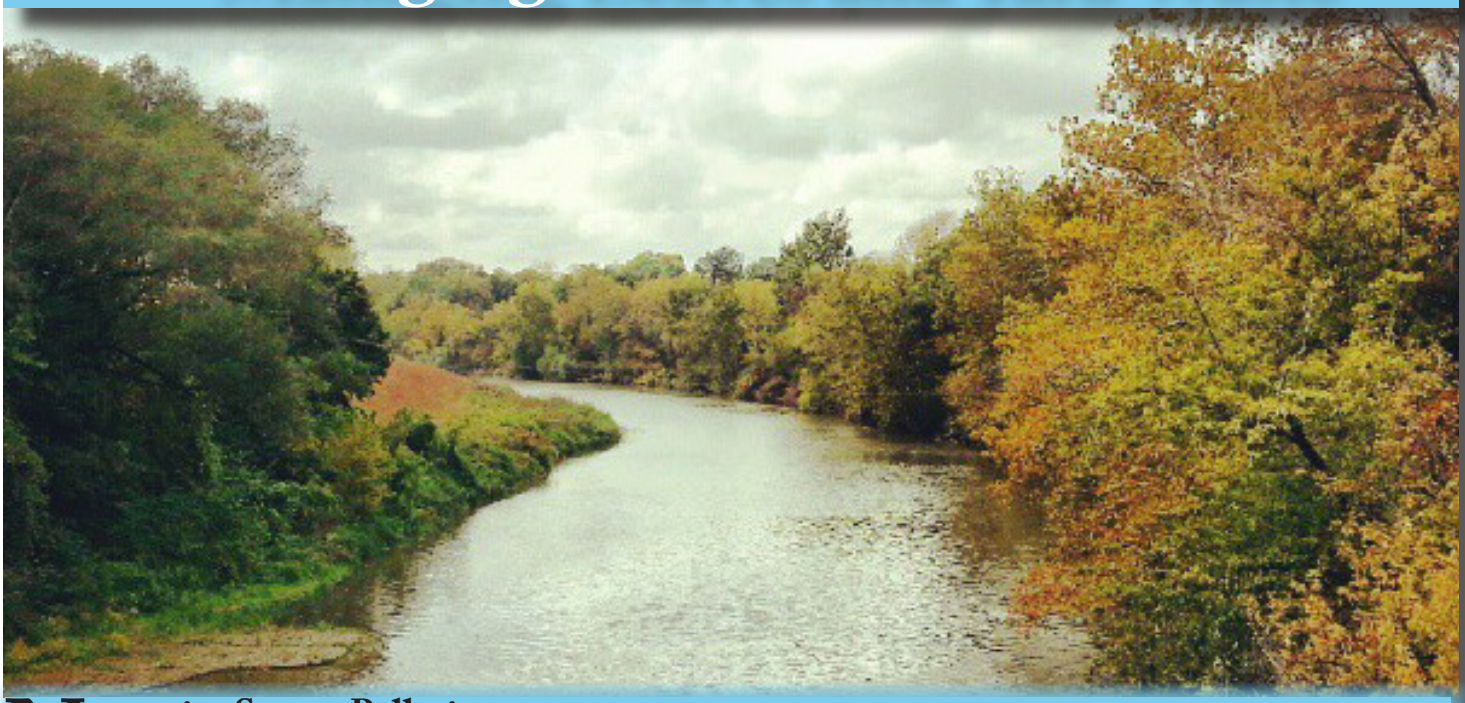
Stormwater Management Factsheets

Muncie/Delaware County/Yorktown

Managing Leaves and Yard Waste



Non-point Source Pollution

Everyday landscaping and lawn care can have significant impacts on water quality by contaminating water supply and harming aquatic organisms through run-off known as non-point source (NPS) pollution.

NPS pollution occurs as water moves across the land or through the ground and picks up natural and human-made pollutants, which then can be deposited into our many waterways through storm drain systems.

The water that carries NPS pollution may originate from natural processes such as rainfall and snow melt, or from human activities such as crop irrigation, lawn maintenance, car washing, etc.

Leaves and Yard Waste are considered non-point source pollutants

According to City Code 52.25 Littering Prohibited:

(A) It shall be unlawful for a person to do the following:

1. Cast, throw, sweep, sift, or deposit in any manner in or on any public way or other public place in the city or any river, canal, public water, drain, sewer, or receiving basin within the jurisdiction of the city, any litter of any kind.

2. Cast, throw, sweep, sift or deposit any litter anywhere within the jurisdiction of the city in such a manner that it may be carried or deposited by the action of the elements, into any public place, private premises, or parking lot within the city.

Yard waste is also addressed as an illicit discharge (Resolution NO. 2006-11) and considered a pollutant that could potentially harm any waterway, stream, ditch and drainage structure.

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Did You Know:

- Yard waste such as leaves and grass clippings are significant contributors to stormwater pollution. Such debris can clog sewer infrastructure causing flash flooding and expensive clean outs.
- Yard waste is also high in organic nutrients, and when it rains they create a "compost tea" that can overload our waterways causing nutrient pollution.
- Yard waste debris often contains fertilizers and pesticides from lawn maintenance, which can lead to our creeks, streams and river if not managed properly.

Help us protect our water, creeks and rivers by following these best management practices!

1 When leaves start to fall, you got to stay on the ball! Do not sweep or blow leaves or grass clippings to the street or leave piles on or near storm drains or drainage channels. Use designated yard bags to dispose of them properly.

2 Recycle your leaves and grass clipping by mulching them with a mower back into your yard to add organic nutrients to your lawn.

3 Compost leaves and grass clippings by building a compost bin and adding a balanced layer of leaves and grass clippings every year. You may also add garden and vegetable scraps to this pile.

4 Sweep up and dispose of any yard waste that makes its way to your driveway, street or sidewalk. This will help prevent excess nutrients from negatively impacting our water quality!

5 Practice natural lawn care! Overseeding can improve your lawn. Instead of using more and more fertilizer to thicken thin grass areas, aerate in the fall and then overseed them. Raking in a thin layer of compost can also improve lawn quality.

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