

Yard Waste & Water Pollution

You are the solution to stormwater pollution!

Protect water quality while saving money and resources with the following tips:



Leave grass clippings on your lawn to reduce the need for fertilizer, increase water retention and improve soil.



Sweep grass clippings and leaves off the pavement to prevent them from entering storm drains and waterways.



Avoid blowing grass clippings and leaves into adjacent lakes, wetlands, and streams.



Use phosphorus-free fertilizer.



Apply fertilizer at the correct rate according to instructions-it's the law!



Sweep up excess fertilizer that lands on the pavement.

Sign up to adopt (and name!) a storm drain:
mn.adopt-a-drain.org



What is the City's policy on yard waste?

Rochester City Ordinance prohibits the disposal of yard waste such as grass clippings and leaves in public right-of-ways, including City streets.

Residents can dispose of their leaves and yard waste, free of charge, at the Olmsted County compost site located at 305 Silver Creek Road NE, across from the recycling center. Alternatively, residents can mulch leaves in yards or setup home compost bins. These practices not only reduce waste but also improve soil quality and promote environmental sustainability.



How does yard waste pollute water?

When yard waste is swept, blown, or washed into the street, it ends up in local waterways by way of storm sewers, contributing excess nitrogen and phosphorus. These nutrients act as fertilizer, fueling the growth of aquatic weeds and increasing the likelihood and severity of noxious algae blooms, which are toxic to humans and animals. Additionally, the decomposition of excess weeds and algae in the waterways can use up the oxygen that fish and native plants need.

Yard waste and other debris can also clog storm drains and cause drainage and flooding issues. To prevent damage from localized flooding to streets and nearby properties, keep yard waste out of the curb and gutter line and clear off storm drains.



Need More Information?



To learn more about proper disposal for yard waste in Rochester, scan the QR code or visit: olmstedcounty.gov/residents/garbage-recycling/compost-site

