

Clean Water Begins in Our Own Back Yard

What we do in the comfort of our yard affects our local waterways. The good news is that we can care for our yard in a way that prevents pollutants from going into local streams and rivers. Clean water not only looks good, it's vital to life! Below are some ideas for your home turf.

COMMIT TO CLEAN WATER

At getgrassy.org you can pledge to take care of your yard in a way that protects water and receive a prize to help you meet that goal. Please call 614-486-9613 for more information.



PLANT A TREE



Trees soak up rain water that would otherwise run off your yard and flow into a storm drain. Interested in planting one? Head to columbus.gov/branch-out for tips that will help you select, plant and

care for your tree with confidence. While there, check out how Columbus residents can earn up to a \$100 rebate on the purchase of a tree for your yard while supplies last. Please call 614-645-0815 for more information.

SOAK IT IN

Learn about ways to put rain water to use in your yard at an in-person workshop or online at greenspotbackyards.org. Residents who live in a participating municipality (including Columbus) are eligible to receive one \$50 rebate on the purchase of an approved rain barrel, compost bin or native plants.



Are you interested in making those native plants part of a rain garden? Find help at centralohioraingardens.org or call 614-486-9613 for more information.

LAWN CARE

- When using fertilizer or weed and pest control products, pay close attention to instructions found on the label.
- Make sure the liquids and granules fall on your lawn where they can do their job. Sweep up whatever falls onto a hard surface.
- Mulched lawn clippings are a natural fertilizer. Let them go to work on your yard so you don't have to.
- Mow to grow by sharpening mower blades and set to the highest setting (3 to 4"). Tall grass equals deep roots and fewer weeds.
- Spring grass grows fast. Mow more than once a week to avoid removing too much at one time.
- Learn more by visiting getgrassy.org.



OUTDOOR CLEANING

- Sweep surfaces with a broom rather than hosing them down. When using the hose, let your grass absorb the waste water instead of sending it to street.
- Save yourself some cleanup by preventing leaks and spills from reaching the surface. Simply place drip pans or plastic sheeting under your work area.
- If a spill does occur, use an absorbent material such as cat litter, sweep it up and discard it in the trash.
- When cleaning items such as lawn furniture, use a bucket and sponge instead of a hose.

Learn more simple acts you can take at home to protect our water at columbus.gov/KeepItClean/



LET US KNOW

It takes a community to keep our streams and rivers clean. Please let us know if you see anything other than rain water entering a storm drain on your street by calling 614-645-STREAM (7873) in Columbus, or call the Ohio EPA at 1-800-282-9378.

Small actions like picking up trash and debris before it washes into a storm drain help keep our water clean.

BAG THE WASTE

There are about 277,000 dogs in Franklin County and, on average, each one creates 0.75 pounds of waste per day. That's nearly 104 tons of dog waste every day!



Dog waste contains some nasty bacteria and when left on the ground it washes into storm drains that lead directly to our streams and rivers.

So if you are a dog owner, "doo" the right thing and PUP (pick up poop) in your own back yard and when you're walking. To help along the way, look for newly installed pet waste stations in many Columbus parks.

Take the PUP pledge at columbus.gov/pup and receive a PUP prize of biodegradable bags (one per household while supplies last).

OPPORTUNITIES

TAKE PRIDE

Our rivers reflect our community. Here are some ideas that make it easy to take pride in the natural beauty our rivers provide:

- Take part in a river cleanup or plan your own.
- Participate in a volunteer activity organized by one of our local watershed groups.
- Check out columbus.gov/volunteer for contact information and more ideas or follow us on Facebook or Twitter (see below).



LET OTHERS KNOW

Storm sewer? Sanitary sewer? It's hard to keep track of all those pipes running underground and out of sight. Take part in Columbus' storm drain marking program and you can help remind people that the storm drains on your street empty directly into our rivers. Visit columbus.gov/stormdrainmarker or call 614-645-2926.



Please join us on Facebook (Columbus Public Utilities) and Twitter (@cdpu)