

utility update

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www.columbus.gov/utilities/

Clean Water Begins in Your Own Back Yard

What we do in 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.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sediment, or eroded soil, is the top polluter of central Ohio's streams and rivers. Healthy grass, trees, and native plants provide benefits including slowing and filtering rainwater and preventing soil erosion.

COMMIT to CLEAN WATER

The City of Columbus, Franklin Soil and Water, and local lawn care companies have partnered to encourage our residents to do their part for water quality by caring for their lawn properly. Visit getgrassy.org to learn more, and take our pledge to receive a free gift.



LAWN CARE TIPS - MOW to GROW

- Most lawns need to be cut every four to five days, not every seven to ten days, like most of us tend to!
- Follow the One-Third Rule: Never remove more than a third of the grass blade.
- Don't scalp your lawn if spring rain or vacation leaves you with really tall grass. Instead, gradually reduce cutting height to keep a healthy balance between root and blade growth. If you keep scalping your lawn, you won't have to mow as often because your grass will die!
- Keep your grass tall at 2½" to 3½" to preserve moisture and out-compete weeds.
- **Sharpen those mower blades with a discount when you take the Get Grassy lawn care pledge.** Dull blades chew, tear, and rip grass, causing it to die back and be more likely to succumb to disease and pests. And you can save on fuel costs by using efficient, sharp mower blades. Visit getgrassy.org for more information about available sharpening discounts.

DISPOSE of YARD WASTE PROPERLY

Dumping yard waste into storm drains or waterways adds excess nutrients to the water, can clog the drains, contribute to roadway flooding, and it is illegal.

The Com-Til Compost Facility accepts yard waste free of charge, year round. Visit com-til.org for additional details and disposal options. Better yet, compost and mulch your yard waste!



Additionally...

- Sweep outdoor 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.

BAG the WASTE

Did you know your pet can also impact water quality? Dog waste has lots of nasty bacteria that are not good for the people, fish and wildlife that live and play in our waterways. Check out this video to learn more: <https://tinyurl.com/PUP-MOV>

So if you are a dog owner, "doo" the right thing and take the pledge to PUP (Pick Up Poop) at columbus.gov/pup and receive a PUP prize of biodegradable bags. Also look for pet waste stations in Columbus parks!



CLEAN WATER IS THE GOAL!

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.



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.

WANT to DO MORE?

The GreenSpot Community Backyards program, in partnership with Franklin Soil and Water, offers workshops where you can meet water conservation experts, ask questions, and get more information about backyard conservation topics that interest you. Each workshop is 90 minutes and explains different actions you can take to prevent water pollution. At the end of the workshop you'll receive a voucher for a \$50 rebate on qualifying native plants, trees, compost bins, or rain barrels. There is also an informative online course and quiz if you cannot attend a workshop, but still become eligible for a rebate.

COMMUNITY BACKYARDS GET \$50 FOR YOUR YARD!

Visit www.GreenSpotBackyards.org for more information!

VOLUNTEER for CLEAN WATER

If you are interested in protecting our natural resources, get involved in our public education programs. You, your community, or school group can participate in stream-bank litter cleanups, invasive plant removal and many other activities that promote awareness & appreciation of our natural waterways.

Learn more at:

www.columbus.gov/utilities/customers/Volunteer-Opportunities/.



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