RAKE FOR THE SAKE OF OUR LAKES AND STREAMS!

Autumn's falling leaves are not welcomed by their aquatic neighbors. If they fall or are raked onto the street, storm sewers will carry them to our lakes and streams, adding phosphorus (the nutrient that turns our lakes and rivers green with algae) and stealing oxygen from the water when they decompose.

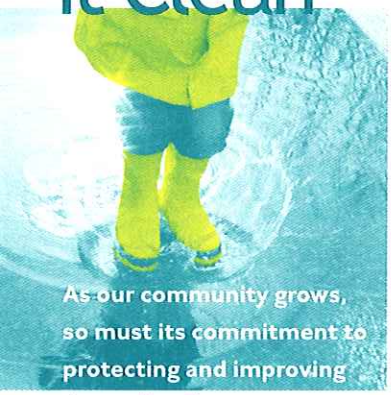
In natural settings, phosphorus in fallen leaves is recycled back into the soil. But this recycling system is bypassed in urban areas that connect hard surfaces to storm sewers. Even when residents live blocks away from a lake or river, the runoff from their yard and street eventually reaches local water bodies. Keeping streets clean is one key to keeping our water clean.

Rochester residents are asked to please keep their leaves out of the streets and off public lands, as required by law. In addition to degrading water quality, leaves can be a traffic hazard and they can cause flooding if they obstruct drainage ways or plug culverts, storm drains, or inlets and outlets to storm ponds.

Residents can help "keep it clean" by take these steps to protect water quality:

- Keep leaves out of the street and storm drains and never dump leaves in drainage ways, wetlands, or water.
- Mulch leaves in the yard or make a backyard compost site for them.
- Instead of backyard leaf management, residents can take leaves to the Olmsted County compost site (located at 305 Silver Creek Road NW, just across from the Recycling Center). In the fall, the compost site is open every day during daylight hours. Private waste haulers can be contacted to learn if they transport collected leaves to the compost site.

Keeping it Clean



As our community grows, so must its commitment to protecting and improving the quality of our water resources. Assets such as Silver Lake and the Zumbro River help make Rochester one of the nation's most livable communities. Keeping our water resources clean and usable is in everyone's interest.

StormWater MANAGEMENT

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