



Join us in keeping water clean!
Together we can make a difference!
Protect it. Pass it on.



ABOUT US

The MWMO is a public organization that partners to protect and improve water and habitat in an urban setting. We invest in people and infrastructure to support clean water, and provide knowledge, scientific data and expertise to help manage our vital water resources.

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Fall Yard Care Guide

Tips for a healthy fall yard that will prevent pollution and protect our waters.



EVERY LITTLE BIT COUNTS

Raking your leaves helps prevent pollution by keeping them out of stormdrains.

DID YOU KNOW that fall is a critical time for yard care? It's the perfect season for planting, weeding, aerating and taking extra steps to ensure a healthy comeback next spring. Doing it the right way will also protect our water quality.

MULCH (OR COMPOST)

Leaves are a potent source of nutrients. Mulch them into smaller bits with your lawnmower — small enough so they blend in with the grass. This has the same effect as adding a round of store-bought fertilizer. You can also add leaves to your backyard compost bin or garden.

RAKE

Fallen leaves form a soggy, decaying mat that smothers turfgrass, exposing your lawn to mold and disease. Rake your leaves, bag them up and remove them. Many cities offer curbside pickup of yard waste. You can also take your leaves to a yard waste disposal site.

MOW

Mow your lawn at a height of three inches. This is short enough to prevent matting (which invites snow mold), but long enough to support a healthy root structure that soaks up moisture and can better withstand the winter.

PLANT

Fall is the ideal time to plant new grass seed, lay sod and patch bare spots in your lawn. Try to choose grass that will grow well in your yard's soil and lighting conditions. Better yet, consider replacing your lawn with native vegetation or “no-mow” turfgrass.

AERATE

Consider aerating your lawn every year or two. Aeration punches small holes in the lawn to circulate air, water and nutrients in the soil. Aerated lawns require less fertilizer and other chemicals to maintain. You can rent a self-powered aerator at your local rental shop.

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR — TAKE CARE OF YOUR LEAVES!

Don't rake your leaves into the street for street sweepers to pick up! In many cities, this is actually illegal. Leaves and other yard waste sitting in the street will enter stormdrains, sending excess nutrients into nearby waterbodies. They can also clog stormdrains and cause flooding.



STORMDRAINS AND WATER POLLUTION

Stormdrains are a direct pipeline to local rivers and lakes. When leaves enter stormdrains, they carry excess nutrients like phosphorus and nitrogen into local waterbodies. This harms our water quality.

WEED

Remove weeds the old-fashioned way by pulling them by hand or using a weed-pulling tool. If you must use an herbicide, follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully. Don't spray it on any hard surfaces or areas where it could end up in the stormdrains.

FERTILIZE

If you need to fertilize your lawn, fall is the right time to do it. Plants are eagerly soaking up and storing any nutrients they can find. Only buy zero-phosphorus fertilizers. Carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions, and sweep up any that falls on hard surfaces.