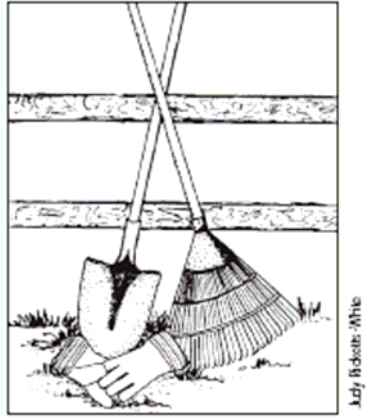


Protect Water Quality in Your Own Yard in Every Season!

Spring



- Recycle winter debris. Lawns and gardens need to be raked out to remove the leaves, twigs and branches deposited during winter storms. Use this material as the base for a new compost pile OR chop it up (with a lawn mower or shredder) and use it to re-mulch around foundations, under shrubs and trees and in groundcover beds rather than going out and buying bags of bark mulch. Don't dump brush and leaves into streams or wetland areas. They add excess nutrients to the system and may cause flooding by blocking water flow.
- Sweep up leftover sand from the road or driveway to keep it out of storm drains and local water courses. This sand will contain salt and other pollutants, so don't use it in vegetable gardens or sand boxes, or dump it in a pile "out back". Sift it and store it in buckets for next winter.
- Rethink the early dose of lawn fertilizer. Avoid "weed and feed" type products that mix pesticides and fertilizers. Why pay for chemicals that you don't need or that force you to start mowing earlier and more often? Put off the first dose of fertilizer until mid-May or apply a thin layer of compost to add organic material to the soil while providing a more balanced dose of nutrients for healthy lawn growth.
- Cover bare soil. If lawn areas are bare or plantings have died over the winter, don't leave exposed soil. Re-seed or mulch to prevent soil erosion. Consider dead plants an opportunity to add native species with multiple season interest to the landscape.
- Start a landscaping log. Spending a few minutes a week writing down what plants are growing well or having problems, what got eaten, and what yard chores take too much time will help when you are making plans for next year.

To learn more or report possible illegal discharges to the storm drain system, call the Village of Beecher at (708) 946-2261.

(Source: Clean Water Fact Sheet, produced by NEMO and Sea Grant Connecticut)