

Beautiful Yards and Clean Water Too



Keep Your Mind on the Gutter

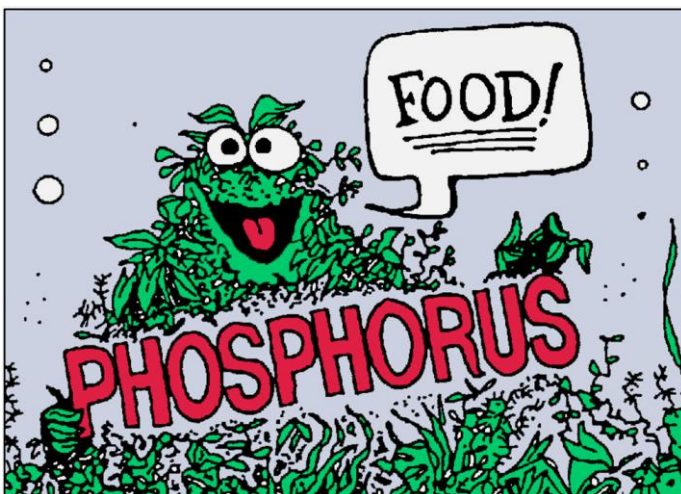
You can have a beautiful yard and protect water quality too. The key to cleaner water is keeping yard wastes, fertilizers, pesticides and soil out of street gutters.

Gutters are part of the storm sewer system that transports excess water from streets to lakes and streams. Unfortunately, pollutants inadvertently placed in gutters move with the runoff.

Many activities necessary to create and maintain an attractive yard have the potential to cause pollution. Most of this pollution can be avoided if Worthington residents are mindful of what goes into the gutters.

Every Little Bit Hurts

While only a small amount of pollution leaves the typical yard, excess nutrients from grass clippings, leaves, fertilizers and soil add up citywide. This pollution degrades water quality and fuels algae blooms.



PREVENT POLLUTION

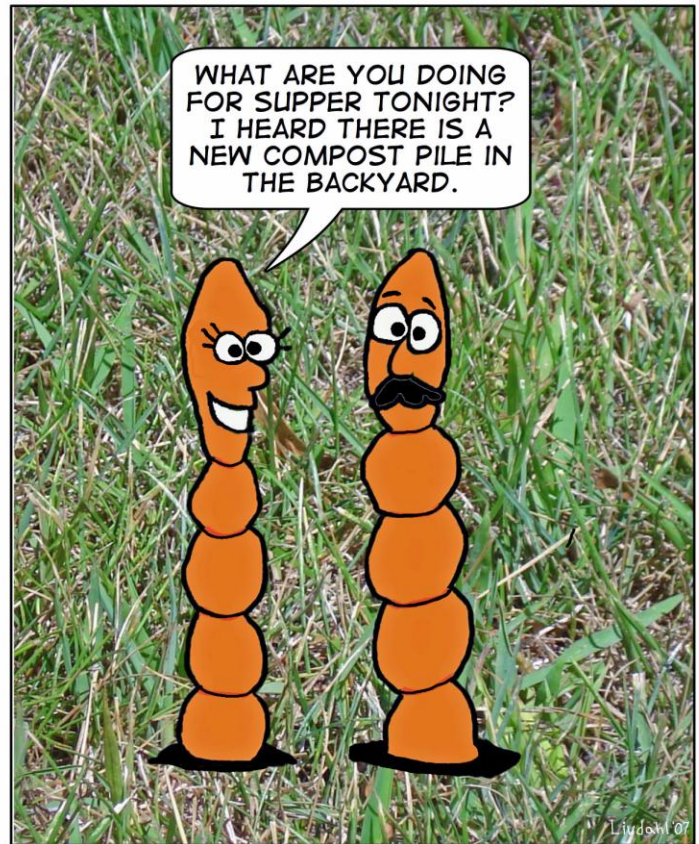
Yard Care Tips

- Change your mowing direction to blow grass clippings into the lawn rather than onto the street or driveway. Sweep up the grass clippings that get away.
- Use a mulching mower to recycle grass clippings. Newer mowers often have mulching attachments. Many older mowers can be safely modified to mulch.
- Create a compost pile for leaves, garden wastes and grass clippings. Compost is high in nutrients and is a cheap alternative to chemical fertilizers.
- Haul leaves, grasses, sticks and branches to the Recycling Center located south of Worthington on Highways 59 and 60.



University of Wisconsin Extension Service

- Test your soil before fertilizing. Most lawns in Worthington will benefit from added nitrogen but do not need phosphorus. Minnesota law restricts the use of phosphorus fertilizer in established turf unless a soil test shows it is needed.
- Calibrate your spreader to prevent over fertilization.
- Apply fertilizers in the fall or spring. Never apply fertilizers to frozen ground.
- Identify problem weeds and insects before purchasing and applying pesticides. Always follow the pesticide label.
- Sweep up fertilizers and pesticides accidentally spilled on driveways, sidewalks and streets.
- Blow leaves onto your lawn. Do not use your leaf blower to sweep debris into the street.



Landscaping Tips

- Avoid stockpiling soil, mulch or other landscaping products on driveways or streets.
- Sweep up soil spilled or tracked onto the streets or driveways.
- Plan landscaping projects so yards are protected by vegetation during the winter and spring months. Landscaping projects done in the late fall can leave sites unprotected for six months or more.
- Plant temporary vegetation, like fast growing grasses, to keep soil in place until permanent vegetation is established.
- Stabilize bare soil to prevent erosion and runoff into the street. Install durable mulch, landscaping mats or silt fences where water is likely to flow into the street.
- Divert roof gutter water away from bare soil onto established vegetation. Use downspout extensions, pipes or landscaping fabrics, where necessary, to prevent erosion.