

City Workers Keep it Clean

A Sweeping Change

To improve the quality of storm water flowing into Lake Okabena and area streams, the Worthington Public Works Department has stepped up its street sweeping program. Streets will be swept up to 15 times this year, about 3 times more often than in previous years.

Street sweeping is important for public safety. It removes excess sand, gravel, and miscellaneous debris from the community's thoroughfares. In spring removing sand applied over the winter months and in the fall removing leaf litter is especially important.

Street sweeping has additional benefits. It reduces the cost of storm sewer system maintenance. Less debris is washed into storm sewer catch basins, lakes and streams. Clean streets look good too.



Street Sweeping and Water Quality

Street sweeping protects water quality by reducing the organic matter and debris carried by storm sewers to lakes and streams. Studies show that a mechanical broom sweeper, like Worthington's, reduces nutrient pollution by up to 15 percent and total storm sewer pollution by up to 30 percent.

Street sweepers are good at removing large particles, but are not as effective at removing the fine grained sediment that carries nutrients. Most of the phosphorus, the primary nutrient fueling algae growth, is left behind. To prevent nutrient pollution, Worthington residents should keep grass clippings, fertilizers, detergents and loose soil away from streets and hard surfaces drained by storm sewers.