

Protecting the Huron River

Fall

it begins in your yard...



Rainwater washes off your yard taking things like fertilizer, pesticides and dirt with it. These pollutants go into our waterways directly or through the storm drains.

If you choose to use fertilizer, **follow these river friendly tips...**

- Always use a lawn fertilizer with slow-release nitrogen and no phosphorus.
- Apply it less often. **Fall is the best time to repair summer damage and prepare your lawn for spring growth.** Most lawns need it only once a year!
- Use a broom, not a hose, to clean fertilizer spills and granules on sidewalks.

Michigan fall gardening tips

Did you know Michigan State University Extension's (MSUE) website, "Gardening in Michigan," www.migarden.msu.edu offers tips, resources, programming on vegetables, fruit, flowers, trees, shrubs, lawns, water, soil, and pretty much anything garden related?

Experts on horticulture, forestry, soil and water, including MSUE educators, blog there about the latest and greatest news and gardening resources. Read Cydney Steeb's tip sheet on fall gardening with recommendations for preparing the soil, avoiding plant diseases, protecting trees and shrubs, and much more. Or find out from Bert Cregg if fall really is the best time to plant trees (he says spring is better).

We especially like the area of the site dedicated to water quality protection. It offers PDF tip sheets on conserving water in your home and yard and water smart tips on irrigation practices, managing yard waste, groundwater, and managing shoreline property. Check out the site today!

Buy and use a rain barrel

Rain barrels collect rainwater runoff from rooftops and allow you to direct it to gardens and lawns where it can be infiltrated by plants and soil instead of washing over pavement.

Rain barrels also slow the rapid flow of water that enters the Huron during heavy rains, helping to prevent volatile fluctuations that cause erosion.

You Save Water and Money!

Watering your garden and lawn takes up 40% of your household water during the summer. Using water from your rain barrel is free!

For more information on Rain Barrels

Go to "Take Action" at www.hrwc.org or call HRWC at (734) 769-5123 x 602.

Rake it or leave it!



Here's what to do with your yardful of leaves...

Rake it! Follow the guidelines in your community for curb-side pick-up. If you're asked to put leaves in the street, wait until just before collection day. Never rake them into or near storm drains, ditches, creeks or the river. Decaying leaves use up the water's oxygen, harming aquatic inhabitants.

Leave it! Mulch leaves by running over them with your lawn mower at next cutting. Leaves and grass clippings are the best fertilizer for your lawn.

Or...rake it and leave it! Rake leaves into a compost pile for a nutrient-rich fertilizer to use on your garden next spring.

Brought to you by your community and the Huron River Watershed Council. For additional information and resources go to www.hrwc.org.

