

## watch runoff...



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.

## fall gardening tips

Did you know Michigan State University Extension's (MSUE) website, "Gardening in Michigan" 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 [www.migarden.msu.edu](http://www.migarden.msu.edu) today!**

## 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!

## mulch more...



Instead of raking your fall leaves into the street, where they can wash into the storm-drains, consider using your mower to mulch them into your lawn as a natural fertilizer. Or compost them

for next spring. If your community's guidelines for curbside pick-up direct you to put your leaves into the street, wait until just before collection day to do so.

## volunteer

**Adopt a curbside stormdrain** and become a steward for the Huron River. Restore the quality of our streams by removing debris from the stormdrains in your neighborhood and labeling them so others know they lead directly to your local waterway.

**Sign up at [www.hrwc.org/adoptastormdrain](http://www.hrwc.org/adoptastormdrain).**

**Join River Roundup, Saturday October 6.** Team up with other H2O Heroes who help with this long-term study of the river by collecting and indentifying river bugs that tell about the Huron's health. No experience necessary!

**Sign up at [www.hrwc.org/volunteer/roundup](http://www.hrwc.org/volunteer/roundup).**