

Spring Cleaning to Protect Minnesota's Water

By Chris Kleist

DULUTH, MN> Spring is just around the corner; the days are already noticeably longer and warmer. This change of seasons is also one of the most critical times for protecting water quality, and this article will describe several ways in which you can play an important role in keeping our water clean.

Todd Carlson, a Program Coordinator with the City of Duluth says "People laugh when we tell them that everyone in town has lakeshore property. But because the storm sewers lead straight to a river or lake, the curb and gutter in front of your house is basically the edge of the water. Whatever goes over the curb or onto the street will likely go into the lake."

Everyone can make a difference and fortunately the potential problems are easily recognizable and can be avoided by following these few simple steps:

Don't sweep sand into the streets. Even the best intentions of "let the street sweeper pick it up" rarely works out. The sand usually washes into the storm sewer before the sweeper can get it. Throw it in the garbage, bring it to a City dump site, or use it as fill in your yard.

Clean up after your pet. Pet waste carries nutrients and bacteria that can be harmful to our lakes, and the bacteria could even end up in our drinking water supply.

Wash your car at the car wash or on your lawn, not in your driveway or street. Think of a time when you saw someone washing their car in their driveway and there was a big trail of sudsy, soapy water running down the curb... where do you think all that soap is going?

Don't dump waste oil, paint, or antifreeze in a catch basin. Always bring it to a recycling facility.



Continue - Page 29

Spring Cleaning Continued

Report illegal dumping! Storm sewers are only for snowmelt and rainwater runoff. If you see someone dumping waste or debris in the storm sewers please call your City or MPCA staff so they can address the issue.

Most cities in this great state of Minnesota have an abundance of high-quality water within their town or directly downstream. We were fortunate enough to have inherited good quality water, and we have a shared responsibility to protect these lakes and rivers for future generations to enjoy.



Upcoming Training Opportunities

Details listed on the calendar at MWOA.net

NE Section Meeting	March 22, 2017
MPCA Annual Collection System Conference	March 27 - 29, 2017
MPCA Annual Wastewater Operations Conference	March 29 - 31, 2017
Collection Workshop	April 5, 2017
SE/SW Section Meeting	May 3, 2017
Intro to Cybersecurity	May 16, 2017
MWOA Annual Conference	July 25 - 28, 2017