

MANAGING YARD WASTE



Here in Goshen, Indiana, the four seasons come and go and each season brings its own outdoor work for home/landowners to enjoy, such as: raking leaves, shoveling snow, or mowing the grass. During the warmer months yard work generates grass clippings, pulled flowers and weeds, twigs and branches, and piles of leaves. The question becomes, what to do with this “yard waste?”

DISPOSAL OPTIONS

To make sure yard waste does not negatively impact local waterways, the following disposal options should be considered:

- 1) **Leave it lay** — Use a mulching lawnmower to leave grass clippings or shredded leaves on the lawn. Grass clippings and shredded leaves will quickly decompose adding nutrients and organic material back into the soil, which will help retain moisture in the soil.
- 2) **Compost it** — Make a compost pile from grass clippings, leaves, twigs, other vegetative waste, and food scraps that over time will turn into the perfect fertilizer (containing nitrogen, phosphorus, and other essential nutrients) or mulch to place in a garden or landscaped area. For more information on composting visit Recycle Indiana’s Composting website: www.in.gov/idem/recycle/2353.htm.
- 3) **Dispose of it** at the Goshen Environmental Center located just west of the intersection of North Indiana Avenue and CR 19. Free drop off of brush and leaves is available to residents of Goshen (proof of residency required) and other items like grass, yard waste, garden waste, and root balls can be dropped off for a price (ranging from \$1 to \$40 depending on the amount of material being dropped off). For more information call the Goshen Environmental Center at 574-533-6200.



ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER HOURS OF OPERATION

Summer Hours: Monday-Friday
8:00 am — 6:00 pm and Saturday
8:00 am — 12:00 pm,
closed Sundays and Holidays.
Winter Hours: Monday-Friday
8:00 am — 4:00 pm,
closed Saturday, Sunday, and
Holidays.

Did You Know?

Storm Drains directly connect to the waterways flowing through the city of Goshen, including the Millrace Hydraulic Canal and the Elkhart River. Stormwater which comes from rain, snowmelt, irrigation washing cars, etc., washes anything and everything that has accumulated on hard surfaces into the many storm drains throughout the City and discharges it directly to a waterway untreated (also known as nonpoint source pollution).

- 4) **Place it** near the curb but NOT on the sidewalk or street for the Goshen Street Department to pick up. Brush pickup week starts the last Monday of the month from May to September (piles must be free of trash), while leaf pickup begins in mid-October and goes until early December (dates can vary from year to year).



- 5) **Truck it** — For general brush and tree trimming removal during the months of April through October, the City's Dial-A-Trailer program can be used to schedule the use of a brush trailer. For more information or to reserve a brush trailer, call the Street Department Monday through Friday, between 7:00 am and 4:00 pm at 574-534-9711.

DISPOSAL OPTIONS TO AVOID

Avoid disposing of yard waste by blowing, raking, or hosing it onto the road, next to a storm drain, or into an adjacent waterway.

As yard waste decomposes or breaks down, nutrients (like phosphorus and nitrogen) are released and act as natural fertilizers, which is beneficial in a yard or garden, but detrimental in a waterway.



The addition of yard waste to waterways leads to excess algae and aquatic plant growth, which can be unsightly. Additionally, when the algae and aquatic plants die, oxygen levels in the water can become depleted creating harmful conditions for aquatic life. The addition of yard waste to the City's storm sewer system can reduce the ability for stormwater to flow through the pipes and potentially clog them leading to flooding on City streets. Furthermore, the City has to allocate more resources to remove debris from the pipes.



Each of us plays a role in the health and wellbeing of our local waterways. Every action for good or bad adds up over time. Let's work together to protect where we live, work, and play.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOUR LOCAL WATERWAYS

Remember:

- 1) Do NOT dump yard waste in the road, storm drain, or waterway.
- 2) Sweep grass clippings, leaves, and dirt back into your yard from the road, sidewalk, or driveway.
- 3) Use a mulching lawnmower when mowing grass and to shred the leaves that have gathered on your lawn in the fall.
- 4) Compost yard waste to create a natural fertilizer and mulch.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Jason Kauffman with the City of Goshen Stormwater Department at 574-537-3832 or by email at jasonkauffman@goshencity.com.

