

A Drop of News

The Maple City Stormwater Toolbox

May 2021

Grass Clippings - Friend or Foe?



Warm weather and spring rains have brought out the lawn mowers and, along with them, the sight of grass clippings on sidewalks, driveways, and roadways. These grass clippings are a stormwater concern because....

1. They can clog storm drains and pipes during a rainstorm causing drainage and flooding issues.
2. Grass clippings and other yard waste (e.g. leaves, bush trimmings, sediment) are considered stormwater pollutants. As they break down, grass clippings release nutrients, like nitrogen and phosphorus, into our local waterways causing unwanted algae growth. Excess algae in a waterway can block out sunlight and deplete water oxygen levels, killing fish and other aquatic organisms.

See page two for information on what you can do to prevent grass clippings from becoming a stormwater pollutant and how they can even help improve the health of your yard!



Mulching lawn mowers recycle grass clippings into natural fertilizer.

Here Comes the Brood!



Shutterstock Image

Cicadas leaving behind their hard outer exoskeletons. Watch for exoskeletons impeding stormwater drainage this summer!

As you may have heard, this year billions of cicadas will emerge in a brood event that only comes around every 17 years. We are expected to experience this rare ecological event right here in Elkhart County, but did you know cicadas may have impacts on stormwater drainage!?

The cicadas spent the last 17 years as larvae living and feeding underground in preparation for reproduction. Once emerged, cicadas shed their hard brown exoskeletons which, due to sheer numbers, has the potential to clog stormwater control measures like roof gutters, storm pipes, and storm drains.

You can help by “adopting” a storm drain near you and keeping an eye out for any cicada-clogged drains! Find out more about Cicadas in this cool ESRI storymap <https://arcgis.com/storymaps/C000>



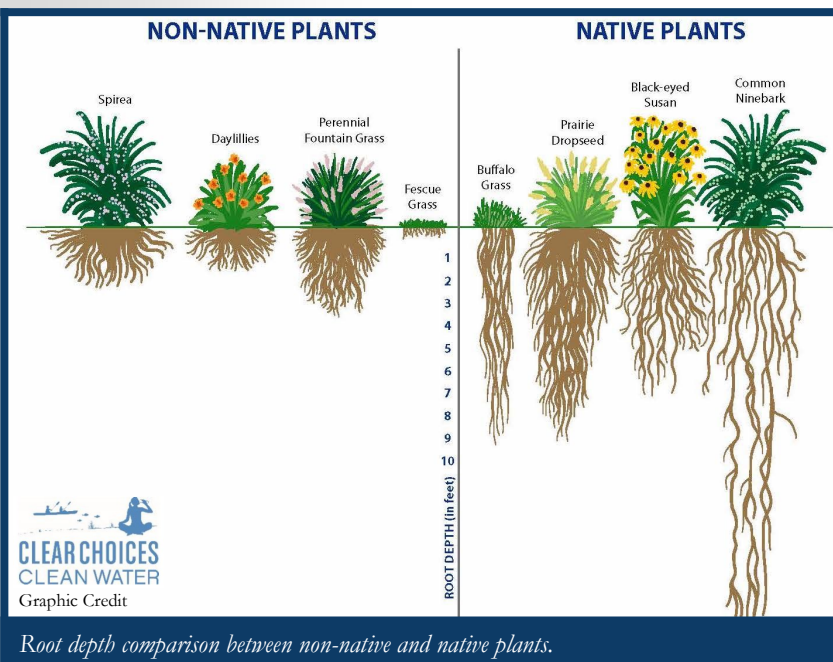
May Pollutant Challenge

How to Keep Grass Clippings out of Storm Drains & Waterways

- ❖ Leave the clippings in place or compost them for a natural fertilizer.
- ❖ Use a mulching mower and/or direct chutes away from hard surfaces.
- ❖ Keep your grass a little longer, taller grass has deeper roots.
- ❖ **Most importantly, sweep up or blow grass clippings off the streets, driveways, and sidewalks and back onto the lawn!**
- ❖ Visit www.goshenindiana.org/education, and check out the Brochures and Fact Sheets section for additional information.



Sweeping grass clippings off the street keeps them out of the drain.



Think Outside the Box, Go Native!

You might also consider planting native plants, which have deeper roots and can handle drier weather better than typical turf grasses. Native plants use less water and don't have to be mowed every week saving a property owner time and money. Bonus! Native grasses capture and clean more stormwater runoff!



Report a Pollutant

Stormwater pollutants include anything other than rain that could flow or be washed into a storm drain. If you see a pollutant entering a storm drain, please call 574-534-2201, send an email to stormwater@goshencity.com, or submit a Stormwater Report through the City's "Report an Issue" button on the City of Goshen website, www.goshenindiana.org.

Public Works & Utilities
Department of Stormwater
204 E. Jefferson Street
Goshen, Indiana 46528
574-534-2201
bit.ly/goshen-stormwater

Director of Public Works:
Dustin Sailor

Stormwater Coordinator:
Jason Kauffman 537-3832

Stormwater Specialist
Mattie Lehman 537-3818

