

October

Trick or Treat: Keep your Storm Drains Neat!

By Jacquelyn Buck

This Fall, Allen County Partnership for Water Quality (ACPWQ) is challenging Allen County residents to keep their storm drains a leaf free zone. Storm drains have a very important yet simple job, to transport stormwater to waterways. It is our job to make sure that they can complete their work without extra nutrient loads and trash making their way into our rivers.

Leaves can come to block storm drains by being blown by the wind, ushered by stormwater, or raked there by homeowners. Regardless of how they got there, we need to make sure they do not stay. When we block storm drains by allowing leaves to create barricades around, on, or in storm drains, they are unable to do their jobs causing localized flooding. This flooding can cause some serious problems for the people trying to walk, bike, or drive safely!

You might be thinking to yourself while looking at the storm drain “it is only a few leaves, what’s the harm in that?” If one person makes that call, as do all of their neighbors, we have a recipe for some serious flooding!

Not only do leaves in storm drains cause flooding, but they also cause excess nutrients to go to our rivers. When leaves decay in or on storm drains, all the extra nutrients go straight in our rivers. Our rivers do not need a boost in phosphorus, but our flowerbeds and vegetable gardens might! Consider mulching or composting leaves over the winter and use them in next year’s landscaping.

So for October, and the rest of the Fall season, ACPWQ is challenging you to keep your storm drain neat! This is not a trick! And your treat? Improved drainage on your street and better water quality for our area.