

6 Life at the Water's Edge

six in a series of six fact sheets on stream management

Enhance the Stream in Your Backyard & Beyond!

Clean Your Stream!

Trash is unsightly...unsanitary...and unsafe for you, your family, and wildlife!



CUYAHOGA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

- ☛ Regularly remove old tires and other garbage from the water and stream banks.
- ☛ Educate all family members to refrain from littering.
- ☛ Participate in community clean-up days.

Every bit helps! Remember to always wear proper footwear and gloves to prevent injuries!

Protect Your Storm Drains!

Most storm drains in the watershed flow directly to streams and creeks. Never deposit waste or trash into storm drains. They can become clogged and flood nearby basements, including your own! Also, sweep up and reuse fertilizers left on sidewalks and driveways. Always recycle used motor oil and anti-freeze. Contact your local County Solid Waste District for information on recycling locations in your community.

Maintain Septic Systems!

Any part of your "plumbing system" can become damaged or simply wear out over time. And any plumbing that's not working properly can be a source of pollution to our streams.

Simple Solutions:

- ☛ Have your septic system pumped regularly.
- ☛ Reduce or eliminate the amount of bleach, chemicals, oil and grease that you wash down the drain.
- ☛ Contact your local County Board of Health to help determine the ideal pumping schedule and for more information.

If you have just moved into a home, you may not know the size of the tank. In this case, you should have the tank pumped and inspected. The company pumping the tank will tell you its size, age, and condition. The frequency of pumping depends on several factors:

- ☛ capacity of the septic tank
- ☛ volume of wastewater (related to size of household)
- ☛ amount of solids in wastewater (e.g. garbage disposals produce more solids)
- ☛ number of people in the household

Get Involved!

Stream Monitoring:

Sample the stream for macro-invertebrates. These insects live in the stream all year round and are an important indicator of water quality.

NO DUMPING



DRAINS TO CREEK

Storm Drain Stenciling:



Stenciling your storm drains is a reminder to "Dump No Waste, Drains to Creek." Contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District for more information.

Stream Clean-ups:

Join your local community for annual clean-up activities in the watershed or adopt-a-spot near your home and keep it clean.

Community Storm Water Management Plans:

Your local municipality needs your help planning and implementing their storm water management plan, which addresses water quality and water quantity problems in your community.

Take the opportunity to voice your opinion and concerns or just find out what it's all about.



Backyard Habitat Improvement Ideas

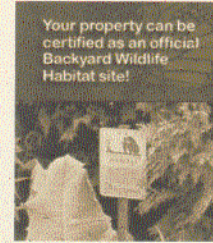
Certify your yard as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat site!



By incorporating the tips included in this series of fact sheets, you should be well on your way to qualifying for an official Backyard Wildlife Habitat certification from the National Wildlife Federation. Residents who provide the four basic habitat elements (food, water, cover, and places to raise young); and who take steps to conserve natural resources in their yard, may apply for certification.

By certifying your yard you will join the more than 33,000 people who share their yards with wildlife. Certified Backyard Wildlife Habitat sites nurture wildlife and benefit the overall quality of the environment by improving air, water and soil throughout the community.

When your habitat is certified, you will receive a personalized Certificate of Achievement recognizing your yard as part of the National Registry of Backyard Wildlife Habitat sites. You will also begin receiving your free lifetime



subscription to the quarterly *Habitats* newsletter and may purchase a weather resistant yard sign.

Visit their website at

www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat for more information, including how to order the Backyard Wildlife Habitat Starter Kit.

Returning our urban areas to a more natural environment

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**Cuyahoga Soil and Water
Conservation District**
6100 West Canal Road
Valley View, Ohio 44125
(216) 524-6580



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