



Don't "Rush to Flush" old Medications! Securely "Wrap and Trash" instead



What's the best thing to do with expired cough syrup, leftover pills, or unwanted vitamins and other personal care products? According to the Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner's Office, the best option for disposing of unwanted medications is to securely wrap the items and put them in the trash.

- Remember to remove or blot out any personal information on the label to protect privacy.
- Entirely seal the container and cap with duct tape to prevent breaking or leaking. Likewise, duct-tape together "blister-packs" of capsules and tablets.
- Double bag the sealed items into opaque plastic bags (such as grocery bags) and securely tape closed.
- Place sealed items into the trash for disposal.
- Properly dispose of used needles and lancets (as used with diabetic treatments) through the sharps program provided at participating pharmacies or through Washtenaw County's Household Hazardous Waste program, <http://recycle.eWashtenaw.org>.

It is no longer recommended practice to pour unwanted medications down the drain because wastewater treatment facilities are not equipped to remove quantities of medical chemicals. The U.S. Geological Survey is beginning to detect in 80% of the watersheds sampled nationally, one or more pharmaceuticals such as cholesterol reducers, blood pressure medication, sleeping pills, hormone replacement therapy, anti-depressants, and antibiotics. The result is that these medications have the potential to affect outdoor water quality and can turn up in drinking water. There is also the concern of developing "super bug" bacteria that are resistant to antibiotic medical treatment. The disposal measures suggested above can be used at home to protect waterways from unused medication and personal care products.

Good to Know...

- **2007 Huron River Film Festival.** Everyone is invited to submit a short film (up to 5 minutes) examining the human connections to the creeks of the Huron River Watershed. Winning films will be awarded prizes and will appear in a gala screening event at the Michigan Theatre on March 30, 2007. Filmmakers may enter as a family, an individual, or a group, such as a class. Details about the contest and information about the river issues as well as the winning films of 2006 are at www.hrwc.org. --*The Huron River Watershed Council*
- Please plan ahead and schedule your water appointments 3-4 days before you want to have your water turned on/off or have the curb box checked.
- **Consider setting up an automatic water bill payment option from your checking or savings account.** To initiate an Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) account service, simply locate a recent water bill and a blank check before calling the Customer Service Center at (732) 994-2666 during weekday business hours. Once in place, you will still be mailed a detailed water bill for your records, marked "Thank you for your EFT payment" and will always receive the "on time" payment discount.

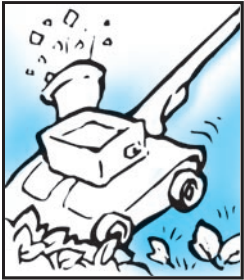
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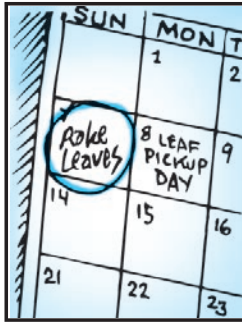
Protect Our Waterways at Leaf Collection Time

In a way, we all live on a river. Water that enters our storm drains flows directly into a stream or river untreated, along with everything that rainwater carries away from our streets: trash, leaves, grass, fertilizers, pet wastes, etc. Reducing pollutants from rainstorm runoff is one of the biggest hurdles to keeping our river clean.

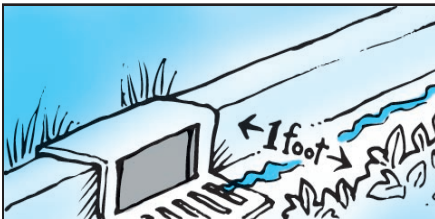
During the Fall, it is especially important to keep leaves out of the storm inlets. In addition to clogging drains and causing backups, leaves that enter the storm drains decay in the water and rob fish of vital oxygen. Follow these steps to give our waterways a hand; you'll also reduce the risk of flooding on your street.



1. Compost yard waste. The next time you mow, mulch the leaves while cutting the grass. They're the best nutrients. You can also put leaves in compost containers for curbside collection.

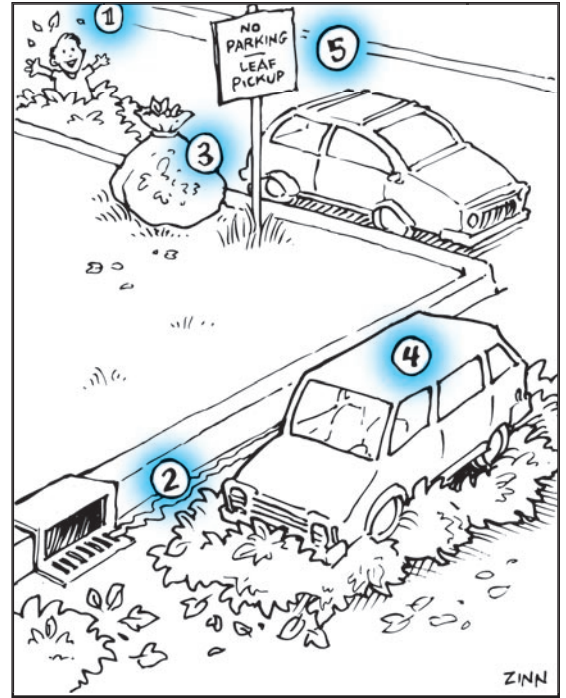
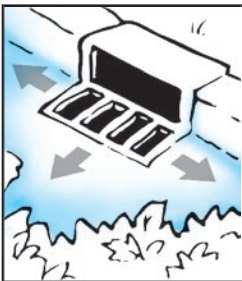


2. Wait until the last minute. Rake the leaves into the street just prior to your scheduled pick-up day. Should it rain, leaves won't enter the storm drain inlets and waterways as easily. Leaves may be raked and stored on your lawn extension instead.



3. Stay out of the gutter. There should be at least a one-foot space between the curb and your leaves for the stormwater to run into the gutter. This will reduce the risk of flooding in your area.

4. Keep inlets clear. Reduce the risk of flooding and help protect the environment by removing accumulated debris from catch basin grates. Don't deposit yard or pet wastes into catch basins.



Fall Street Leaf Collection Reminders:

- 1 Remind children not to play in street leaves.
- 2 Leave one foot of space between the curb and leaves for stormwater to run into the gutter.
- 3 Leaves in plastic bags are not accepted.
- 4 Do not park vehicles over dry leaves to avoid potential fires.
- 5 Do not park on streets with posted tow-away signs. Cars can be ticketed and towed.

Remember that street leaves are usually picked up on a schedule, weather permitting. Street leaf pickups may be delayed if a City's trucks are needed to clear street snow. If the leaf collection schedule is delayed, new collection dates will be assigned.

Ann Arbor's street leaf pickup schedule is posted online at www.a2gov.org and over the Leaf Collection Hotline 994-8131. This page is adapted from The Homeowner's Handbook, available from the Office of Janis Bobrin, Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner.

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