

**To protect water quality, I will...**



# MOVE MY CAR FOR STREET CLEANING

## How does moving my car help stormwater?

Street cleaning is important because leaves and organic material on streets get into storm drains. Once in the drainage system, organic material releases phosphorous, polluting rivers. Leaves can also block drains, resulting in flooding.

Our City takes great pride in the effectiveness of our street cleaning program. However, it's essential for residents to move their vehicles according to the posted street cleaning schedule for the program to be most effective. By moving your car, you are giving street cleaners the room they need to pick up leaves, sand, and other debris along the curb, keeping this material out of our rivers and streams!

## What is stormwater?

Stormwater runoff is rain or snow melt that flows over the ground. In Cambridge, stormwater flows to the Charles River or Alewife Brook.

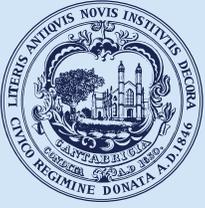
As stormwater flows, it picks up pollutants left on driveways, sidewalks and streets. Common pollutants in Cambridge are trash, leaves, grass clippings, salt, and dog waste. We all play an important role in keeping our sidewalks and storm drains clean of these materials, so only rain goes down the drain!

**Learn more at [www.cambridgema.gov/stormwater](http://www.cambridgema.gov/stormwater)**



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## **USE LESS FERTILIZER ON MY LAWN**

### **How does using less fertilizer help stormwater?**

If applied improperly or in excess, fertilizer can be washed off your property and carried into storm drains. Fertilizer contains nutrients, but too many nutrients in rivers can cause algal blooms. Follow these tips to keep your lawn green while also protecting water quality:

- Get your soil tested to see if fertilizer is needed.
- As an alternative to fertilizer, consider scattering fresh grass seeds, aerating your soil, or planting native shrubs.
- If using fertilizer, opt for one that is slow-acting and phosphorus-free (look for "0" as the middle number on the bag).
- Follow application instructions carefully and do not over-fertilize. If you use too much fertilizer, the excess will just wash away in the next rain. Do not apply fertilizer before a rainstorm.

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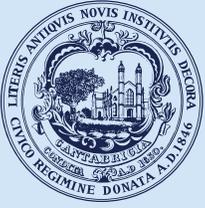
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## **USE LESS SALT ON MY SIDEWALK**

### **How does using less salt and deicer help stormwater?**

Melting snow picks up salt and de-icers from your sidewalk and flows to local rivers. Your commitment to environmentally friendly snow and ice practices makes a difference! Follow these tips to keep your pavement safe while protecting water quality:

- Shovel early and often down to bare pavement before applying de-icer.
- Use non-chloride and more environmentally friendly de-icers when possible instead of rock salt.
- Apply de-icers sparingly following manufacturer's instructions. Use the least amount needed (only a small amount is required to melt ice).
- Remove slush once de-icer has done its job. Damage to concrete can be caused by the freeze/thaw cycles of de-icing agents left on sidewalks.
- When storing, cover salt and de-icers in areas that aren't open to rain.

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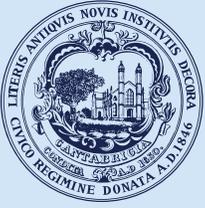
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# **BAG MY LEAVES AND GRASS CLIPPINGS**

## **How does bagging leaves and grass clippings help stormwater?**

Bagging leaves, grass clippings, and other yard waste for curbside pickup keeps these materials out of the streets. These materials can clog storm drains and cause pollution in our rivers. Leaves and grass will leach nutrients into stormwater as they break down, contributing to pollution and algal blooms.

You can help by bagging your grass clippings in the spring and raking up your leaves in the fall!

- Pick up yard waste on your lawn, along your sidewalk, and in the curb in front of your property.
- Be sure not to blow or sweep these materials into the street.
- Consider leaving grass clippings where they fall when you mow. They will add nutrients to your soil, reducing the need for fertilizer!

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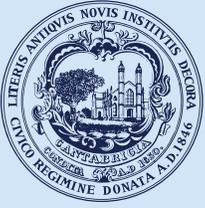
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## **PICK UP AFTER MY PET**

### **How does picking up after my pet help stormwater?**

Picking up pet waste is an important part of keeping our streets and waterways clean. While we love our furry friends, when pet waste is left behind, it can wash into storm drains when it rains - going directly to the Charles River and Alewife Brook untreated.

Why exactly is pet waste bad for our rivers and streams?

- Pet waste contains nutrients that encourage excess weed and algae blooms.
- Decaying pet waste uses up oxygen in water, which is harmful for fish and other aquatic life.
- Pet waste can carry diseases and bacteria that are unsafe for humans.

Please do your "doody" and scoop the poop! Be sure to collect all your pet's waste and place in trash bins (never down a storm drain).

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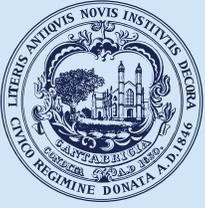
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## **SIGN UP TO BE A STORM STEWARD**

### **How does volunteering to be a Storm Steward help stormwater?**

By claiming a drain, volunteers commit to checking on a drain each month and keeping it clear of debris, like trash and leaves. This ensures stormwater can flow into the drain and helps keep these materials out of our waterways.



### **How can I sign up?**

Visit Cambridge's Storm Stewards website at <https://cambridge.mysticdrains.org/>, to find a drain in your neighborhood, give it a name, and commit to checking on your drain each month.

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