

# The Greenville Storm

A newsletter for Greenville residents dedicated to reducing storm water impacts on Greenville Creek

## 2017 Plat Book Sales

Mark your calendars! In mid-December 2016, Darke SWCD will be selling the new and improved 2016 plat book. The cost is \$25.00 per book. Check with the office in December to order yours. A plat book makes a great Christmas gift!

## Calendar of Events

9/1-10/30	<b>Milkweed Seed Pod Collection Event</b>
10/7	<b>First Fridays: Live Music</b> 6-9pm
10/17	<b>Darke SWCD Fish Sale orders due</b>
10/27	<b>Beggar's Night– Downtown Greenville</b> 7pm
11/19	<b>Hometown Holiday Horse Parade</b> 7pm
11/20	<b>Darke SWCD Annual Meeting &amp; Banquet</b> 6:30pm
12/2	<b>First Friday: A Christmas Night</b> 6-9pm



Municipal Building  
100 Public Square  
Greenville, OH 45331



# The Greenville Storm

This newsletter was developed to inform residents of Greenville about storm water related issues and provide educational information to reduce the impacts of storm water to the Greenville Creek. We hope that this newsletter provides you with helpful information on saving money while protecting the local environment at the same time.

## Fall Lawn Care Tips

### Leave grass clippings and fallen leaves on the lawn

Grass clippings and leaves return nutrients and organic matter to your lawn and soil, and prevent soil compaction caused by rain and foot traffic. Too many? Instead of bagging them, use excess leaf material in garden beds or add it to your compost bin for a good brown carbon source. Dead leaves also provide cover for wildlife during colder months. Many animals rely on leaf litter for food, shelter and nesting material. Also, many moth and butterfly caterpillars overwinter in fallen leaves before emerging in the spring.

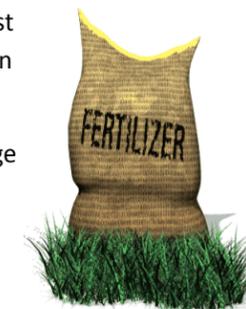


### Fall is for Fertilization

University research shows that fall is the best time to fertilize, since shorter days and cooler temperatures encourage root growth. The grass will use what fertilizer is available this fall, while the remaining nutrients are frozen in the soil to be used in the spring when the soil warms. Organic fertilizers are typically slow-release and provide some benefit to the soil, while synthetic products are quickly available to the plant and provide immediate growth and greening.

## Lawn Fertilizer & Water Quality

- Have your soil tested to determine which type of fertilizer to use. Using your soil test results will help you avoid over-application of nutrients.
- Look for products with a higher percentage of slow-release forms of nitrogen. Quick-release products may not be able to be absorbed by the plants in time, and can move offsite quickly.
- Sweep fertilizer accidentally applied to sidewalks, driveways or roads back into the lawn. If you don't, wind and water can carry it to storm drains that empty directly into the nearest stream.
- Don't apply fertilizer to frozen or very dry soils.
- Use special care around water sources like ponds and streams. A buffer or "no fertilizer" zone of 10-25 feet prevents contamination that can lead to algae growth.



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## Composting

### What is composting?

All organic matter will eventually decompose on its own, composting speeds up this natural process. Cold composting is a slow process that requires little maintenance. Materials can simply be piled on the ground or in a bin and left to decay on their own. Cold composting may take several months to over a year to break down the organic matter, but it is more effective for suppressing soil-borne diseases. Hot composting is quicker, but requires more maintenance. This process produces heat which kills most weed seeds & plant diseases. The pile should be at least 3'x3' to produce heat, and bigger is better. Turn or mix the compost to incorporate more air & distribute moisture and add water as needed. Turn the pile once a week to yield finished compost in 1-3 months.



### What can I compost?

Yard & kitchen wastes, such as grass clippings, leaves, weeds, egg shells, teabags, coffee grounds & filters, fruit & vegetable scraps, and shredded paper. **NEVER** compost meat or dairy scraps or pet waste!

### What does it mean if my compost pile smells bad?

Assuming you have not added meat, dairy, or fat a bad smell can indicate too much moisture or too much nitrogen. If the pile smells like rotten eggs, allow the pile to dry or add dry material. The pile should be barely moist. If the pile smells like ammonia, add carbon-rich material like dry leaves or straw to balance the nitrogen.

### What if nothing is happening?

If nothing is happening, the pile may be too dry, or does not contain enough air or nitrogen. First, check the moisture level. If it is barely damp, add "green" materials such as grass clippings or vegetable scraps. Large branches & twigs take a long time to compost. You can chop or shred them into smaller pieces to encourage faster decomposition.

### How can I tell when the compost is ready?

The compost is ready to use when it is crumbly, dark brown & smells earthy.

### How does composting help the environment?

Grass clippings and kitchen scraps are taking up valuable landfill space; these materials make up approximately 25% of all household wastes. Using compost on your garden or in flower pots can reduce the need for pesticides & commercial fertilizers. Top dressing with compost reduces weeding & water use. You can use compost as a fertilizer or soil conditioner that will enrich your garden soil in a natural & economical way.

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Stay up to date with Darke SWCD!



[www.darkeswcd.com](http://www.darkeswcd.com)



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## Annual Tree Sales

Beginning in February 2018, our annual tree sales order form will be available. Tree sale orders will be collected through mid-March and will be available for pick-up in mid-April. This year we will be offering several species of trees and shrub that were not offered during last year's sale.

If you are interested in ordering trees, watch for press releases in the newspaper and on our website in February.

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## This Autumn Try Homemade Weed Killer



- Continue to mow your grass 3 to 4-inches high
- Aerate your yard to introduce oxygen and reduce the incidence of thatch in the lawn
- Lawn seeding can be done from September through the end of October. It is important that the seed is in direct contact with the soil surface for best germination.
- If you aren't seeding your lawn this fall, consider applying corn gluten meal to deter fall weed seeds.
- Monitor for grubs and animal activity; skunks will dig in the yard to find grubs.
- Mulch leaves with a lawn mower. Leaves provide nutrients for healthy soil as a natural fertilizer.
- Fall is the best time to feed the lawn. Amend the soil according to soil test results. Soil testing should be done in the late fall every three years to determine nutrient needs.