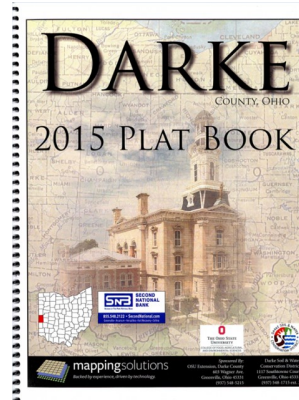


# The Greenville Storm

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>
9/24 & 9/25	<b>Prairie Days Festival– Shawnee Prairie</b> 10am—5pm & 12pm—5pm
9/24	<b>A Day of Harvest– Downtown Greenville</b> 9am—1pm
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
11/21	<b>Darke SWCD Annual Meeting &amp; Banquet</b> 6:30pm
12/2	<b>First Friday: A Christmas Night</b>



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.*

## Backyard Conservation: Mulching

Mulching is one of the simplest and most beneficial practices you can use around your home. Both organic (grass clippings, bark chips, etc.) and inorganic (rocks, plastic, etc.) have numerous benefits, including:

- \* Protects the soil from erosion
- \* Reduces compaction from the impact of heavy rains
- \* Conserves moisture
- \* Maintain a more even soil temperature; in winter, mulched soil may not freeze as deeply
- \* Prevents weed growth
- \* Helps prevent heaving of plants during periods of fluctuating temperatures



Mulches used to help moderate winter temperatures can be applied in late fall after the ground has frozen, but before the coldest temperatures arrive. Apply mulch after the ground is frozen to deter rodents looking for a warm over-wintering site.

Mulches used to protect plants over winter should be loose material (ex. Straw, hay, etc.) that will help insulate the plants without compacting using the weight of snow and ice.



## Prepare your Rain Barrel For Winter

A rain barrel is a great way to conserve ground water and potentially reduce your water bill. It is important to winterize your rain barrel so it will last for many years.

Tips for winterizing your rain barrel:

- Unhook and empty your rain barrel
- Clean out any debris that has collected in the bottom
- If possible, store your barrel indoors
- If you store it outdoors, store it on its side with the spigot up in the air and secure it so it doesn't blow away

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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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## Know the 4R's of Lawn Fertilization

You may not think that the fertilizer you spread on your lawn is a source of water pollution. However, excess nutrients applied to neighborhood lawns are carried with storm water runoff to local streams and rivers. The cumulative effects of this runoff has created a large scale water pollution problem. We are all responsible to keep our local lakes, rivers and groundwater clean. By following the 4R's we can reduce the potential for pollution from our lawns:

- **Right Type:** Soil testing should be done to determine fertilizer needs for your yard. Soil testing should be done during the late fall once every three years. Unless your soil test shows a need for phosphorus, choose a slow release phosphorus-free fertilizer.
- **Right Rate:** Refer to your soil test results for the appropriate fertilizer application rate. Do not exceed the recommended rate and never apply more than 1.5 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet.
- **Right Time:** The best time of the year to apply fertilizer to your lawn is Autumn since cool season grasses are actively growing.
- **Right Place:** Avoid fertilizing near streams, ditches, hard surfaces and slopes. Only apply fertilizer where there is a need for the nutrients in your yard.

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## Autumn Tips to Help Your Lawn & Keep Our Waters Clean



- 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.