

## **Keep Litter and Leaves out of Storm Drains**

Many residents don't realize the environmental impact of their daily habits. Take yard waste for example.

- In the separate sewer system, which is most of St. Louis County (to include Warson Woods), if yard waste such as leaves, grass clippings, and small twigs are disposed of in a storm drain, they will make their way to a natural body of water where they threaten aquatic life and degrade water quality.
- In the combined sewer system, which is all of St. Louis city and a portion of St. Louis County, those materials can enter the wastewater system and cause blockages and treatment issues.

In both systems, yard waste can clog inlets, leading to street flooding.

What is a Storm Drain or Inlet?

Storm drains or inlets prevent flooding by draining rainwater and melted snow off of streets and other paved surfaces. They can be found on urban and suburban streets, often at corners and on the sides of curbs. Drains or inlets on the street itself are grated to prevent debris from entering. In much of the St. Louis area, stormwater does not go to the wastewater treatment plant. Instead, it is released into the environment along with any pollutants picked up along the way.

You can help!

Remember - if it is on the ground, it is in our water.

- Never allow yard waste to be washed down or put into storm drains.
- Sweep driveways and sidewalks clean. Remove debris and residue that could end up in a storm drain from concrete and paved areas around your house.
- Do not sweep or blow grass clippings along the street or into a storm drain.
- Remove leaves and other debris from the Storm Sewer inlets in the street near your residence. If you have an area storm sewer inlet (inlet open on 2 sides or more generally found between yards or in grassy areas) in your yard, keep the inlet openings free from leaves and other yard debris so that storm water can easily enter the inlets.

The Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District thanks all our neighbors and community partners that help to clear these stormwater drains of debris.