



Flood Mitigation - Keeping Drains Clear

When it rains, stormwater picks up pollutants such as pet waste and pesticides. It also carries branches, leaves, and yard clippings down the street. These accumulate at storm drains and can cause them to become clogged. Clogging leads to streets flooding, and rotting leaves can release nutrients that can cause algal blooms and kill fish.¹ There are steps that residents can take to help mitigate townwide flooding.

How You Can Help

- Rake your yard of loose leaves
- Do not blow or rake leaves into the street²
- Compost your yard waste
- Choose to go without fertilizers, or choose natural fertilizers
- Keep your yard waste in bags so it cannot be swept away by stormwater, preferably paper bags to keep plastic out of compost
- Keep your garbage cans out of the road if a storm is coming, or make sure they have secure covers so they don't spill into the street³
- Keep your gutters clear so debris will not be introduced to the street
- Be aware of the storm drains in your area, and if you see one being clogged then do your best to remove the debris



Residents should take pride in their community's appearance and work to maintain it. It is not simply the job of the town but of everyone living in it to participate in such activities. Remember, this water is going into your waterways too. If there is garbage tangled up in the leaves and branches, it will be introduced to a water body and can harm wildlife.

¹ Municipal Association of South Carolina. 2016. "Cities proactive in keeping drains clear." Retrieved Jan 4, 2021. https://www.masc.sc/Pages/newsroom/uptown/June-2016/Cities_proactive_keeping_drains_clear.aspx

² Portland Bureau of Transportation. 2021. "Stormwater Drainage." Retrieved Jan 5, 2021. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/index.cfm?a=319667>

³ Baltimore City Department of Public Works. 2020. "Residents urged to prepare NOW for tropical storms: keep storm drains clear, check sump pump." Retrieved Jan 5, 2021. <https://publicworks.baltimorecity.gov/news/press-releases/2020-08-03-residents-urged-prepare-now-tropical-storm-keep-storm-drains-clear>