

KEEP YARD WASTE AWAY FROM STREAMS

Dumping yard clippings, leaves, and other debris into streams and floodplains is a serious threat to our local streams and may violate state and local floodplain and water quality ordinances. Yard waste dumped along stream edges suffocates and kills the trees and shrubs that are critical for avoiding stream bank erosion. Storms can easily wash lawn clippings piled in the floodplain into the stream. Yard waste carries a harmful excess of nutrients to the stream, which in turn robs the stream of oxygen needed by fish and aquatic insects. Leaves and other yard waste raked into streets can wash into storm drains, causing flooding, impeding stream flow, and creating areas of stagnant water that may create mosquito problems.



Yard waste can clog culverts and cause flooding. It also brings too many nutrients to the stream, causing oxygen shortages.

A few tips for handling yard waste:

- Follow your county and municipal schedules for drop off or collection of yard waste. Use paper yard waste bags.
- Compost leaves or yard waste whenever possible. Find out more about composting and yard disposal from the Chester County Solid Waste Authority (<http://www.chestercountyswa.org/>) or Delaware County Solid Waste Authority (<http://www.co.delaware.pa.us/SWA/>).
- Allow leaves and woody debris from the ground in natural areas of your property to remain. Leaves, twigs, and branches provide a great source of food and nutrients for microorganisms that are critical to maintaining healthy soils and plants.