Make A Clean Sweep For A Clean Stream

What is a Street Sweeping Program?

Streets, roads, highways and parking lots accumulate significant amounts of pollutants that contribute to stormwater pollution. Pollutants include sediment, debris, trash, road salt, nutrients, and traces of metals. When it rains, pollutants flow into storm drains, inlets and catch basins and eventually into our creeks, streams, and rivers. A street sweeping program enables municipalities to proactively reduce pollution in our watershed by eliminating this litter before it makes its way into the streams and rivers. Given that there are no independent studies to determine the most effective street sweeping program municipalities can select equipment based on price and individual preference. An effective street sweeping program can remove several tons of debris a year from city streets minimizing pollutants in stormwater runoff.

Municipalities typically conduct street sweeping after the snow melts in the winter so accumulated debris can be removed.

How can you Help?

- Find out when your municipality holds its street sweeping program by checking its website or contacting their office.
- Look out for signs that your municipality may post prior to your street being swept.
- Once you see posted signs, make arrangements to move your vehicle from the street. Otherwise, your Public Works Department will not be able to clean the parking lane and gutter, two locations where most debris collects.
- Help spread the word to your neighbors.
- Remove any items in front of your home that are blocking the roadway.
- Remove large sticks or branches from the roadway as these will jam the sweepers operating systems.
- Conduct your own 'mini-sweep' around the exterior of your home. Be sure though to properly dispose of refuse and avoid piling leaves or other debris in the street.
- Cleaning schedules often change due to factors beyond your municipality's control. Your municipality will appreciate your patience and help!
- Do not dump your waste down storm drains. Storm drains eventually lead to our Three Rivers. Litter, leaves, pet waste, and toxic chemicals have no home there.

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Remember only rain to the drain!

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