Landscape Waste

Organic wastes and sediment can contain pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers that are hazardous to San Diego residents and toxic to our environment. Leaves and other yard waste that get into storm drains or gutters can cause flooding by slowing or blocking the flow of rainwater into the storm drain system. In addition, as organic waste decomposes it allows harmful bacteria to grow that can lead to beach closures. Never let these materials enter the storm drain system.

Proper Yard Maintenance

- Use a broom—not a hose—to clean up leaves, clippings and litter from patios, sidewalks, driveways or along your curbs.

- Sweep regularly and don't blow, hose or rake any pollutants into the storm drain system (curb, gutter, street, drain or inlet).

- Put litter and other debris into the trash can and use your green bin to recycle organic yard waste.

- Residents can also bring larger amounts of home-generated recyclable green waste to the Miramar Greenery free of charge.

- Compost grass clippings, leaves and plant trimmings at home and reuse as a soil amendment in your garden or yard.

- Schedule large projects for dry weather and do not apply pesticides, herbicides, fungicides or fertilizers before rain events.

- When transporting yard waste in a vehicle, it must be covered with a tarp to prevent the debris from falling out.

- Temporarily cover or protect exposed soil to prevent erosion.

STORMWATER REGULATIONS

It is illegal to discharge pollutants from landscaping such as leaves, grass clippings, sediment, pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers into the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) (San Diego Municipal Code §43.0304). Penalties associated with these violations can be up to $10,000 per day per incident.

Irrigation Considerations

Urban runoff begins when yards and large landscaped areas are over-irrigated. Prevent pollution by conserving water on your property.

- Water during cooler times of the day (before 10 a.m. and after 6 p.m.).
- Adjust sprinklers to stop overspray and runoff.
- Make needed repairs immediately.
- Use drip irrigation, soaker hoses or micro-spray systems.
- Use an irrigation timer to pre-set watering times.
- Switch to a water-wise landscape - native plants need less fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and water.

For information on watering restrictions, proper landscape watering times and conservation rebates, please visit: sandiego.gov/water/conservation.

Chemical Alternatives

Common household pesticides can end up in our creeks, rivers and waterways. Reduce the risk of pesticide use by using less-toxic alternatives and Integrated Pest Management (IPM). To follow best practices, you should:

- Follow all pesticide label requirements.
- Select a pesticide specifically designed to control your pest – don't kill insects that are beneficial.
- Use pesticide alternatives, such as predatory insects, when available.
- Use mulch instead of herbicides to prevent weeds and help absorb water.
- Use fertilizer sparingly—most plants need far less than typically given.
- Store all landscape chemicals in a contained, covered area.
- Plant fast-growing cover plants to shield and bind soil to prevent erosion.

For more information, please visit: sandiego.gov/thinkblue/public-education/ipm.shtml.

Keep Pollutants Out of Storm Drains

Many people think that when water flows into a storm drain it is treated, but the storm drain system and the sanitary sewer system are not connected. Everything that enters storm drains flows untreated directly into our creeks, rivers, bays, beaches and, ultimately, the ocean. Stormwater often contains pollutants – including chemicals, trash and vehicle fluids – all of which contaminate our beaches and harm fish and wildlife.

Whether at home or work, you can help reduce pollution and improve water quality by using the above Best Management Practices as part of your daily cleaning and maintenance routine.

To report stormwater pollution in San Diego, call the Think Blue Hotline: (619) 527-7500. | thinkblue.org

You can also use the Get It Done app at sandiego.gov/get-it-done.

The City of SAN DIEGO