

# STORMWATER FACT SHEET



Quick facts on...

## Grass Clippings: How You can Protect Water Quality in the City of Portage

### Protecting our local Water Resources

One goal of Portage's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit is raising awareness of City residents, businesses and visitors on how their actions can impact stormwater quality. With respect to our local drainage ditches, please take a few minutes to review how each of us can help protect local water resources.

Our local drainage ditches are critical components of Portage's stormwater conveyance system. For these critical conveyance systems to function properly, City Staff perform periodic inspections of local ditches and works with Portage Utilities Staff to clear obstructions. During our inspections, we have found **grass clippings** and **yard waste** that have been dumped along the banks of and into local ditches. Along with reducing the conveyance capacity of local drainage ways, decaying yard debris such as grass clippings, branch cuttings and leaves in waterways can release nutrients leading to **weed** and **algae growth** and use up oxygen leading to **oxygen depletion**.



Grass clippings discarded along bank of local Portage waterway. This is a violation of Portage's Ordinance; **fineable up to \$2,500 per day**.

### What Can You Do to Protect Water Quality?

- ◆ Do not dump, blow or sweep yard waste into a ditch, street or storm drain.
- ◆ Leave grass clippings on your lawn to act as a natural fertilizer and soil conditioner.
- ◆ Compost leaves and grass clippings, producing mulch for flower beds and gardens.
- ◆ Bag or Containerize waste and drop off at the Street Department.

*Our local waterways can look like this...*



*Or, with your help, they can look like this:*



**What we have found in local ditches that degrades our local water quality:**

- Grass Clippings
- Tree Limbs
- Discarded Tires
- Trash and Debris

*Clean Water is a Community Effort!!*

Report Water Pollution Concerns to: 219-762-4204

