

## How to Support Clean Water in Your Everyday Routine

Is there anything better than summer in Ohio? It's the perfect time to be outside, enjoying the sun and the environment! Read on to learn about a few simple steps you can follow this summer to keep our local water bodies healthy and clean!

### Lake Erie Starts in Your Backyard



When water flows down the street or over the lawn into the nearest storm drain, where does it go? And perhaps more importantly, what does it take with it? In Northeast Ohio, all stormwater eventually ends up in Lake Erie. Stormwater is defined as water (typically from rain or snowmelt) that flows over the surface of the land into the nearest storm sewer, stream, or lake. **Stormwater is not sent to any treatment facility** and empties into our waterways untreated. This means that any litter, waste, chemicals, and contaminants that the stormwater picks up along the way ends up in Lake Erie too. This season, consider taking some of the steps described below to help decrease stormwater pollution and improve our water quality!

### Pet Poop – More Than Inconvenient

Pet waste is not only inconvenient to step in but also contains nutrients that harm our waterways. Pet poop contains excess nutrients similar to fertilizers that lead to water quality issues and dangerous algae concerns. It also contains disease-causing bacteria such as E. coli, that when left behind will end up in local streams, rivers, and Lake Erie. This means that your favorite swimming spot could be contaminated with fecal matter. Here are some tips to clean up poop:

- Use plastic bags to pick up the dog poop and throw it away in a garbage can.
- Use newspaper if you would rather not use plastic (dog poop can be composted when wrapped in newspaper but be sure to do some research beforehand to make sure you do it safely).
- Pooper scooper cleaning tools can help you avoid bending over.
- Flush dog poop down the toilet (be sure to just flush the poop and not any extra plastic).

### Sustainable Fertilizer Habits

Late summer presents the ideal conditions for harmful algae blooms to thrive on Lake Erie. The number of blooms is directly related to the amount of nutrients in the water, including phosphorus and nitrogen. Both phosphorus and nitrogen are major nutrients in fertilizer runoff from the land.

Be careful swimming in the water during algae season. Harmful algae blooms can lead to infections, or sickness among people and be fatal to dogs/ pets. Check NOAA for frequently updated information about where the algae blooms and hazards are that day.

Tips to reduce fertilizer runoff (save money and the environment):

- Only use the instructed amount of fertilizer when necessary
- Apply several days before rain is predicted
- Apply to only grass (no impermeable surfaces)
- Keep grass clippings on your lawn (a natural fertilizer)



### Note for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Phase II Communities:



CRWP can provide annual walk-throughs of municipal facilities and provide recommendations for implementing Minimum Control Measures (MCMs) to assist with meeting permit requirements. CRWP can assist with compliance with Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP) implementation and NPDES permit requirements. CRWP has developed a virtual staff training on Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping for our members' use which can be used to meet the member's annual MCM6 requirement. Additional information and the training video can be found here: [www.crwp.org/staff-training-video-mcm-6](http://www.crwp.org/staff-training-video-mcm-6)