

NOVEMBER 2009

Yard care is a critical part of exterior maintenance for your home, and in Texas it is a year round necessity. Grass and weeds cannot grow longer than 9 inches in length without becoming a violation of City Ordinance. Grass & weeds are also not permitted to grow over concrete surfaces, such as; curbs and sidewalks in excess of 9 inches.

Proper care of your lawn is considered a health and safety issue, as the environment is impacted by improper care. Remembering to keep yard debris out of storm drains is critical to the proper function of our drainage system. Storm drains are designed to carry rain water away from our streets, and into our local bayous. Yard waste can impede the flow of run off water, and can contaminate it as well.

Here are some tips for you to help to keep our storm drains clean and clear:

- **Don't over water your lawn.** Much of the water applied to lawns and gardens is never absorbed by the plants. Water applied too rapidly is lost as runoff, which may carry polluting fertilizers and pesticides to our bayous and lakes.
- **Use the correct amount of fertilizer and pesticides.** Fertilizers and pesticides are used to compensate for the loss of nutrients and protection once provided by organic debris and rich soil. As your soil loses its organic matter; it allows more of these chemicals to run off and wash through it – contributing to the pollution of lakes, streams and underground water supplies.
- **Keep your yard mowed frequently for a natural fertilizer.** By leaving a small amount of grass clippings on the lawn to decompose, it provides about 2 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 sq ft of lawn per year, along with the perfect balance of essential nutrients that aren't included in most chemical fertilizers.
- **Bag your lawn waste in paper lawn bags for curbside collection.** If you chose to not compost your yard waste, be sure to bag all yard clippings each time you mow. Check the storm drains located near your property, and clear away any debris that may have collected with a rake or shovel. Most home improvement stores sell large yard waste paper bags to allow you to use a "green" approach to removing excess clippings.

Yard waste can be placed curbside for collection on your regular trash days, Tuesday & Friday. If you use a lawn service, please ensure that they are not setting out your clippings curbside on a day other than the collection day. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 281-983-2950.