

## **PREVENT YARD WASTE FROM POLLUTING OUR WATER WAYS**

Seasonal information targeting stormwater runoff and water quality issues from the Phase II Stormwater Management Communication Committee.

### **Marketing Season: October/December and Summer**

#### **Prevent Yard Waste from Polluting Our Water Ways**

In the fall and winter season, fallen leaves and other yard waste get blown into the streets and eventually end up in the storm drain system at the first rain event. This significantly impacts the quality of the water, because unlike sanitary sewers, anything dumped into the storm drain system flows directly into the nearest lake, stream, creek or river without any treatment to remove contaminants. Yard waste decaying in creeks and rivers decomposes in a process that removes oxygen from the water. Fish and other aquatic life cannot survive in water with low oxygen.

#### **What can you do to minimize fallen leaves and other yard waste from polluting our waterways?**

- Do not dump fallen leaves and other yard waste into the inlets, storm drains or on creek banks.
- Clean up fallen leaves and other yard waste that reach the street to keep it out of the storm drain system.
- Use a mulching mower or a mulching blade and leave grass clippings on the lawn as fertilizer.
- Use fallen leaves as winter or summer mulch or shred them and leave them on the lawn.
- Compost your leaves, brush, grass clippings and other yard waste.
- Do not dump grass or yard waste onto a creek bank or area where it will be washed into creeks and rivers.