

# HOW TO PREP FOR SPRING

April showers bring may flowers! Spring is a great time to get outside and prep your home for upcoming rain and warmer temperatures. Here are some things to keep in mind when your outside prepping for spring.



## YARD WASTE

There are many ways to deal with yard waste but why should you worry about it? If yard waste (grass clippings, leaves, brush, trash) is left along streets, driveways, and sidewalks, then when it rains all of that waste can be washed straight to storm drains. This can cause storm drains to become blocked and risk flooding. Plus, grass clippings and leaves can add too much nitrogen and phosphate into our water ways. Excess phosphorous and nitrogen added to surface waters can lead to cloudy, green water from accelerated algae and weed growth. Decay of this extra organic matter can depress oxygen levels, killing organisms.

Try these uses for grass clippings and leaves: add them to your compost, use them as mulch, use them as a filler for raised garden beds, leave grass clippings on your lawn to add nutrients back into it, or even use grass clippings to naturally dye fabric or Easter eggs!



## PET WASTE

Yes, it has been cold outside so maybe you slacked on cleaning up pet waste over winter. So, get out there and clean it up! But why, you ask? Pet waste is more than just a stinky mess, it contains bacteria and parasites, as well as organic matter and nutrients, notably nitrogen and phosphorous. The organic matter and nutrients contained in pet waste can degrade water quality by using up oxygen and releasing ammonia. Low oxygen levels, increased ammonia, and warm summer water temperatures can ultimately kill fish as it is picked up in stormwater runoff and outlet into local bodies of water.



## VEHICLES

With warmer weather comes wanting to wash winter grime off your vehicles. Opt for an environmentally friendly soap and wash your car in the grass so the water soaks into the ground verse into a storm drain. Going to a car wash is always a great option also.

Always clean up vehicle leaks promptly and dispose of oil, anti-freeze and other vehicle waste properly! Call the WV DEP to ask about hazardous waste disposal options at 304-558-5938.

## CHECK YOUR GUTTERS

Your home's gutters are very important! Gutters are responsible for funneling the water off of the roof and away from your home (but not onto your neighbors home). Clogged gutters can cause water to fall and collect directly around your foundation and cause your homes and yards to flood. You want to keep water away from your foundation as much as possible.

Cleaning your gutters regularly, even if you have gutter guards, is a great way to prep for those spring showers. You can hire a service to clean your gutters or doing it yourself can save you \$100 or more. Plan to clean gutters at least twice a year—more often if the roof is directly beneath trees or you live in a region with frequent storms. But only take on this task if you can work safely from a ladder or the roof. If your roof is higher than a single story, you're better off hiring a gutter-cleaning pro.

