

# Sweep up! Rake up! Pick up!

Rain washes anything that's on streets and paved surfaces down storm drains and into lakes and rivers.

Help keep our water clean!

[adopt-a-drain.org](http://adopt-a-drain.org)



Thank you for signing up to adopt a storm drain in your neighborhood!

By adopting a drain, you're committing to keep the drain and the area around it clear of leaves, trash and other debris for the next year—and hopefully longer. There's no specific requirement for how often you need to sweep up, but be sure to check the drain before (and after) it rains, and when the snow begins to melt.

We'll deliver a sign to your yard in the next month to recognize and publicize your commitment to protecting neighborhood lakes and rivers. Keep it in your yard, even if the drain is at the end of the block; we want to recognize you and your efforts!

We hope the sign will be a conversation-starter in your neighborhood. To that end, on the back of this card, we've outlined four simple actions you and your neighbors can take at home to keep pollution off streets and sidewalks, and out of local waterways. Inside, you'll find a few tips on how to maintain your adopted drains.

We've also provided two postcards. **Keep track of the (estimated) amount of debris you collect from the drain and report that to us twice a year—at the start of winter and at the end of spring—via postcard or email.**

This helps us track the total impact we are having on local waterways. You can report the estimated debris in number of pounds or number of 30-gallon trash bags. Not all debris is created equal, but our best (not scientifically validated) guesstimate is that a gallon of debris weighs about a pound.

While we ask you to commit to your adopted drain for at least a year, we will assume you are continuing to participate in the program until you notify us otherwise. You can discontinue your participation at any time by logging in to your account at [adopt-a-drain.org](http://adopt-a-drain.org) and abandoning your drain. Or, send us an email.

If you have any questions, please email us at: [cgeestormdrain@hamline.edu](mailto:cgeestormdrain@hamline.edu)

Thanks so much for your participation in Adopt-a-Drain. Working together, we can protect and improve Minnesota lakes and rivers.



**Dog poop** carries harmful bacteria. Pick up after your pet.



**Leaves, grass and dirt** feed algae and turn lakes and rivers green. Keep them off streets and sidewalks.



**Trash** Keep it out of lakes and rivers. Put it in a garbage bin.

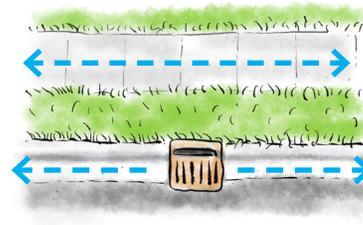


**Salt** One teaspoon of sidewalk salt permanently pollutes 5 gallons of water. Use it sparingly. For colder temperatures, use sand or kitty litter.

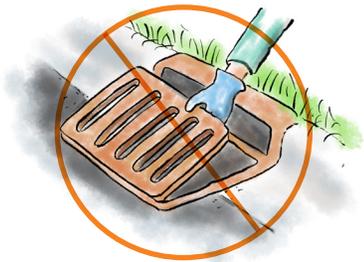
# Tips on how to clear your drain and be safe while doing it



**Helpful tools for cleaning** the storm drain: a broom, a rake, a trash grabber, gloves, an orange cone and/or safety vest, a snow shovel or dustpan, and a pail or yard waste bag. (A rolling pail could be deluxe if you have one.)



**Not just the drain.** While the program asks you to adopt a drain, clearing debris from streets and sidewalks is helpful, since anything on pavement can wash into storm drains when it rains.

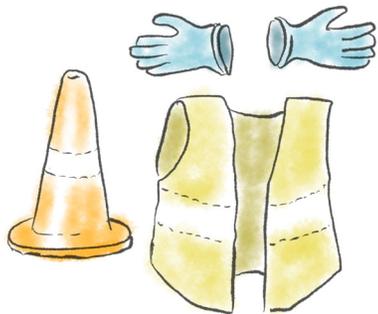


Clean only the surface of the storm drain grate and the area around it. **Never remove the grate** or otherwise attempt to clean inside the catch basin. If the drain seems to be plugged or have any problem, contact city staff and they will send workers to address the issue.



**To dispose of waste, separate it into three categories** and place it in the appropriate receptacle: trash, recyclables (glass and plastic bottles, cans) and compostables (leaves, grass clippings, sticks and sediment).

**Sediment you collect in the spring** is not compostable, as it contains chemical residue from deicers used over the winter. Put it in the trash. If there is a lot of spring sediment near your drain, you may want to let city street sweepers take care of it. Since many trash haulers do not want to take sediment, you could end up with a pail of toxic waste that's difficult to get rid of. If there is A LOT of sediment near your drain, notify city staff, as this may be an indicator of a bigger problem.



**Safety first!** There could be something sharp or otherwise harmful near the drain, so wear gloves to protect your hands and be careful when picking up leaves and trash. You might want to use a trash grabber to collect debris.

Consider wearing **bright or reflective clothing** when you are clearing the storm drain to make sure you are visible to cars. Do not stand or crouch on busy streets.



**Busy streets.** It's best to adopt drains on local residential streets. If you do adopt a drain on a street with lots of traffic, please stick to clearing trash and debris from the sidewalk and let city staff take care of the street and the surface of the storm drain.



If you have **questions about how to properly dispose of trash**, compost and recyclables, contact the city or your garbage collection service.



If you have any **questions about the Adopt-a-Drain program**, please email us at: [cgeestormdrain@hamline.edu](mailto:cgeestormdrain@hamline.edu)