

Don't Let Your Leaves Go Gown the Drain

The next time a street floods during a heavy rain, don't blame the problem on the downpour. The actual cause may be those lovely, colorful fall leaves.

Leaves not only cause flooding, but also cause other problems when they are washed down a storm drain or drainage ditch. Once in the storm drainage system, they travel through them into underground streams or into streams or rivers on to the Ohio River. The leaves travel so quickly, there is no time for them to decay before reaching the natural streams.

A large amount of leaves deposited at one time at the bottom of a river or lake can disrupt the ecosystem by smothering the vegetation fish use for nutrients. Also, the oxygen required to decay the leaves depletes the oxygen needed for fish to live.

Most bagged leaves left at the curb are collected with other wastes by Waste Management or by City crews for recycling. Loose leaves raked to the road edge are vacuumed and picked up by City crews. The leaves are transported to the City's Composting Facility, where the leaves are processed into compost over a one-year period.

The resulting matured compost is ultimately given to local residents or used as a soil amendment on City parks and other public properties, thus saving the City thousands of dollars in unnecessary landfill disposal fees. Last year over 1,000 tons of leaf compost were generated from over 125 truck loads of bagged leaves and vacuumed leaves collected from the curbs of Radcliff homes.

For more information about storm water pollution and how to keep our environment clean, call Radcliff City Hall at (270) 351-4714 or visit our website at www.radcliff.org.