

Keeping Radcliff Beautiful

While Radcliff residents don't like the looks of trash, the problem is usually just a nuisance. But for fish in local streams and rivers, litter is not only an eyesore, it can also harm their home and food supply.

Once down the storm drain, litter and urban runoff pollution can damage fish and wildlife populations, kill native vegetation, make recreational areas unsightly and increase the risk of streets flooding by clogging storm drains. Styrofoam cups, empty fuel containers, shopping carts and large sheets of furniture packing, even an old car frame-- what do these things have in common? All of the items are frequently seen polluting our waters. What most people don't realize is that most of the trash is not thrown directly into the river, but comes from other areas of the city.

"Most likely, the larger items were thrown into one of the hundreds of miles of storm channels that weave throughout the city," said Harold Brown. "Many citizens use storm drains and storm channels as places to dispose of all kinds of trash. We've seen containers, bicycles and furniture make their way through the storm channels."

"As for smaller pieces of trash, rain moves all litter left in yards, streets, driveways and parking lots down the storm drain grates you see in the street." The storm drains lead to the channels that empty into the underground streams, Mill Creek, and Otter Creek. These waterways discharge their contents into Salt River, Ohio River and the Mississippi River.

Our rivers and lakes are beautiful amenities, and add value to our region. Recreation such as canoeing, fishing, and swimming will not be enjoyable if our lakes become too polluted. Many native plants, birds, fish, and wildlife depend on the rivers, creeks and lakes for food and habitat. If you see trash being dumped into storm channels or want more information about keeping storm water clean, please call Radcliff City Hall at 351-4714.

We all must do our part to keep our streams, rivers and lakes beautiful throughout the year. April Clean-up is a month set aside for tidying-up, but we shouldn't limit our clean-up efforts to one month a year. Here are a few tips to put into practice in order to make the city a cleaner place to live:

- Put litter into garbage cans; never throw it into storm drains or the street.
- Recycle as much plastic and other materials as possible.
- Don't litter, set a good example for others, especially children.
- Carry a litter bag in your car, never pitch things out the window.
- Make sure trash cans have tightly fastened lids, animals can carry garbage into the environment.
- Adopt a spot in your neighborhood to keep clean and maintained.

