

# STORMWATER COALITION



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Information provided by the Stormwater Coalition, a committee of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG)

The Stormwater Coalition is a committee of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (419.241.9155). The coalition is composed of the following members:

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City of Northwood  
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City of Oregon  
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City of Rossford  
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City of Sylvania  
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City of Toledo  
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Village of Haskins  
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Village of Millbury  
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Home Builders  
Association  
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## Change in the Weather, Change Stormwater Strategies

### Leaf Collection & Management

Keep leaves out of storm drains and do something useful with them. Several options are available:

- Spread leaves like mulch in your planting beds or around trees. The leaves will decompose providing excellent fertilizer for your plants in the spring.
- Compost them.
- If you must dispose of leaves, use a community compost or yard waste facilities.
- Participate in a residential leaf pick-up program. Most Stormwater Coalition member jurisdictions offer fall leaf collection (be sure to check with your jurisdiction for collection days in your area).

Most residential leaf collection programs ask residents to rake leaves close to the streets, but not in them. Leaves raked into the streets can wash into storm drains and clog them. Excess organic matter in drains is never a good idea. Note that some jurisdictions do request that leaves are collected into the streets. If you live in one of these communities, wait to rake them into the street until the day or week of collection and keep piles away from drains.

### Gutters

Fall is a good time to clean out roof gutters and while you are up there, think about gutter protection. Gutter protectors work the way storm drain grates do by preventing leaves and debris from entering the gutter in the first place. Improperly maintained roof gutters can harbor bacteria (from decaying plant leaves and plant matter), which can be carried with the runoff. Gutter overflows from blockages can cause soil erosion below the overflow site causing excess sediment in the stormwater runoff.



Example of a roof gutter requiring cleaning.

### Winterizing Rain Barrels

Rain barrels can be damaged if they are not properly maintained for the winter. The best option to winterize a rain barrel is to disconnect it completely.

- Disconnect the rain barrel from your downspout and install a downspout extension to redirect water away from your house.
- Drain your rain barrel completely. Water remaining in the rain barrel may freeze.
- Store your rain barrel indoors for the winter or flip it upside-down to keep out precipitation that may freeze and damage your rain barrel.

If you plan to keep your rain barrel connected for the winter, be sure to disconnect any hoses from the rain barrel valves. These valves can be damaged by expansion and contraction of metal due to temperature changes. Insulating your rain barrel is another option.