

# Help Protect Your Summer Fun

Summertime is all about camping, boating, swimming and fishing at our most popular water spots in the Houston-Galveston region. Nothing can put a damper on the spirit of summer like a lake or bay full of trash and debris.

When it comes to littering we all live downstream of somebody else's trash. Substances that make their way into our neighborhood storm drains flow directly into our bayous, rivers, and ultimately Galveston Bay. This contaminated storm water arrives at the Bay just that way—contaminated. Storm water receives no treatment.

Every person has a stake in their community, including a stake in the community's litter problem. We have found that a clean community discourages littering and illegal dumping. Proper handling of litter and waste in a community raises the standards and expectations of everyone.

There are seven primary sources of litter:

1. Pedestrians or cyclists who do not use receptacles.
2. Motorists who do not use car ashtrays or litterbags.
3. Business dumpsters that are improperly covered.
4. Loading docks and commercial or recreational marinas with inadequate waste receptacles.
5. Construction and demolition sites without tarps and receptacles to contain debris and waste.
6. Trucks with uncovered loads on local roads and highways.
7. Household trash scattered before or during collection.



Jonathon Ifft of BSA Troop 839 Flaming Arrow District leads his Eagle Scout project.

Littering is an individual behavioral problem or a business problem that can become a problem for your community.

Changing a societal norm like littering begins with each of us.

By modeling proper trash and waste disposal, you will cause

others to consider their actions, too.

Here are some quick ways you can help reduce the amount of litter and waste that piles up in your community and eventually ends up in our local waterways.

- Don't pour anything in a gutter or down a storm drain that you wouldn't want to swim in.
- Keep your neighborhood free of litter and yard waste.
- Don't blow leaves or grass clippings into storm drains or ditches.
- Don't overuse fertilizers or pesticides.
- Pick up pet waste and dispose of in garbage cans.
- Maintain your septic tank system properly.
- Take used motor oil and antifreeze to a recycling location.

Want to get your community involved in Litter Prevention? Check out our Storm Water Inlet Marking (SWIM) Program at [www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org](http://www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org) or call 713-290-3000 for more information.

To report illegal dumping call 713-290-2831 for Harris County residents for 311 for City of Houston residents.💧

"To waste, to destroy our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed." - Theodore Roosevelt

# How to Be YardWise-

A Simple Guide to Summer Lawn Care

## Grasscycling

Grasscycling means leaving grass clippings on the lawn to decompose into soil.

- Mow grass at the proper height and disperse the grass clippings down into the soil
- Water grass only as needed—get the soil wet to a 6-inch depth every five days
- Fertilize grass with slow-release fertilizers as needed to correct deficiencies.

## Grasscycling Benefits

- Makes turf greener and tougher
- Prevents common turf diseases
- Reduces lawn fertilizer requirements
- Does not cause thatch—in fact, helps prevent it
- Reduces total time spent mowing and maintaining your lawn
- Cuts down on watering needs and costs
- Eliminates disposal of grass clippings (and sometimes leaves too)

## WaterWise

- Water thoroughly, but only as needed—monthly for trees, shrubs, and ground covers, every 5 days or so for lawns.

- Water early in the morning to prevent diseases and to minimize evaporation.
- Use drip irrigation where possible to minimize evaporation.
- Avoid wasting water on sidewalks and other paved areas. Also, try to keep water from running off your yard.
- Set sprinkler head to spray large droplets, not fine mist.



We hope these tips can get you well on your way to being YardWise and having a beautiful and healthy low-maintenance lawn. For additional information and materials on YardWise lawn care, please contact us at 713-290-3000 or visit the WaterSmart website at [www.watersmart.cc](http://www.watersmart.cc).💧

# NEWS SPLASH!



## New Look, Same Cause!

In the next month, the Harris County Storm Water Section will be unveiling the new Clean Water Clear Choice website. We promise an interactive, user-friendly site that will give you all the information you need at-a-click. Check us out at [www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org](http://www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org)

## New and Improved Recycle Guide Available!

The new edition of the Recycle Guide is available for request. If you need to know how and where to dispose of ANYTHING, the Recycle Guide is what you want! Call us to request yours today! 713-290-3000.

## Call for Volunteers!

Would you like to work with us at our community events? We are always looking for passionate volunteers who are interested in helping us further our cause. Opportunities are available year-round. We'll provide you with all the tools you'll need to be a successful volunteer. Great for high school and college students who need volunteer hours, but all ages welcome! Join us! To add your name to our volunteer roster, please contact Dimetra Hamilton at 713-290-3074 or [dhamilton@swq.hctx.net](mailto:dhamilton@swq.hctx.net).



## Just for Floats!

Did you know that elephants are the only animals that can't jump?

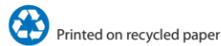
Did you know that snacking on one apple could give you more energy than a cup of coffee?

Did you know that a quarter has 119 grooves around the edge?

Did you know that every day more money is printed for the Monopoly board game than the U.S. treasury?



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# CURRENTS

[www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org](http://www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org)

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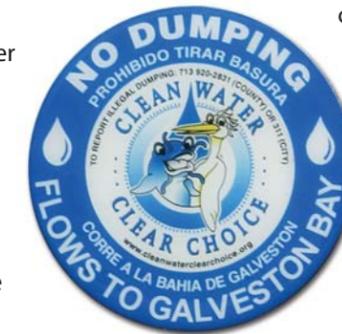
## Storm Water Under Construction

Here in Houston and Harris County, we are no strangers to construction. Whether it is the latest road re-paving, new highway ramps or new home construction and park restoration projects, construction has become the norm in our every day lives. We have many thoughts about how construction effects the way our daily activities flow, but rarely do we realize the huge impact that construction has on the health of our local waterways.

The combination of construction debris and sediment creates a downstream dumping ground, chokes stream channels, and disturbs the environment for local wildlife. Storm water receives no treatment.

Fortunately, storm water discharges from construction activities are highly regulated by Harris County and the City of Houston, but it is important for all of us to be aware of the condition of construction sites in our home and work communities.

Essentially, here's what happens when water flows over a construction site and into the storm water drainage system. Because construction activities produce many different kinds of pollutants, like nails, roof shingles, lumber, sediment and other construction debris, these materials are picked up by storm water runoff.



You can help to ensure that proper measures are being taken to control the amount of debris that enters our bayous and lakes. If the health of our waterways is protected, our quality of life will improve when we can happily enjoy swimming, boating and fishing in our local communities.

If the construction of roads and buildings requires the use of toxic or hazardous materials such as solvents, asphalt, or paints, these materials can be moved by storm water as well into our area bayous and rivers and ultimately, Galveston Bay.

If you have concerns about a construction site in your community, please express your thoughts to 311 if you live inside the City of Houston or 713-920-2831 for Harris County residents.

## Coming Events

### Friday, August 19-Sunday, August 21st

Catch us at the Houston Home Show! The Houston Home Show will be held at the George R Brown Convention Center located at 1001 Avenida de las Americas, Houston, TX 77010. For ticket information, log on to [www.texashomeandgarden.com](http://www.texashomeandgarden.com)

### Saturday, November 5th

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event will be held at the Sam Houston Race Park located at 7575 North Sam Houston Parkway West, Houston, TX 77064.

### Saturday, October 29th

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event will be held at the University of Houston-Clear Lake located at 2700 Bay Area Boulevard, Houston, TX 77058.



## IN THIS ISSUE

Protect your summer fun.....	2
Summer Lawn Care.....	3
Coming Events.....	4

