

clippings left on the lawn do not cause thatch. Thatch is the layer of living and dead roots and stems at the soil surface. Troublesome thatch is typically caused by improper use of lawn chemicals, compacted soils, excessive watering, over-fertilization, and other factors.

**Rake it or leave it**—Follow The City of Kentwood guidelines for leaf pick-up. Never rake or blow leaves into or near storm drains, ditches, or streams. Decaying leaves use up the water's oxygen, harming fish and the aquatic insects that fish depend on to survive. Better yet, mow leaves into the lawn. Leaves and grass clippings are good fertilizers for turf grass.

For Kentwood residents only, our collection facilities readily accept leaves (no brush or grass clippings) each fall. Residents may drop them off at 5068 Breton Ave SE. For available dates and times call the Dept. of Public Works at 554-0817.

## Reducing the Impact of Polluting Materials

**BMPs**—If soil is disturbed, utilize Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as, silt fence, erosion control blankets, various geosynthetic products, polyacrylamides, and/or other BMPs that will ensure the temporary stabilization of the soil until permanent vegetation can be established. Make sure all workers know about the BMPs on site and keep the BMPs properly maintained. Stabilize the soil as soon as possible with permanent vegetation.

**Vegetated Buffer**—Where possible keep a well vegetated buffer strip between stockpiles and drainage ways. Similarly, keep other polluting materials away from storm water flow paths. Respect designated “No Mow” and “No

Herbicide” buffers.

## Report the Release of Polluting Materials

When polluting substances are spilled or released by a contractor or a contractor's employee that can not be immediately contained and removed, or if any amount gets into the storm sewer, it must be reported upon discovery. All such incidents shall be reported to The City of Kentwood Engineering or Public Works Department by contacting:

James Beke at (616) 554-0737 or  
John Gorney at (616) 554-0825.

When spills or releases of polluting substances are observed by a contractor or a contractor's employee, but caused by others, then reporting to The City of Kentwood is encouraged.

Spills or releases that may cause a threat to the health or safety of the public shall be reported immediately to 911.

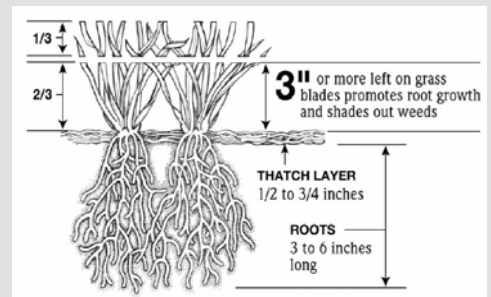


**REPORT POLLUTION PROBLEMS TO:**  
Kentwood Engineering Department  
Phone: (616) 554-0737  
Fax: (616) 698-7118  
E-mail: [bekej@ci.kentwood.mi.us](mailto:bekej@ci.kentwood.mi.us)



# City of Kentwood

## What Every Landscaper Must Know About Storm Water



## Protecting Water Quality in



## The City of Kentwood is Regulated by the US EPA and Michigan DEQ. So You Are, Too. Help Prevent Water Pollution.

**Before doing any commercial or municipal landscaping** in The City of Kentwood, you must be familiar with the **potential storm water pollution sources** that may be encountered during the course of your work.



There are methods and tools that can be utilized to **prevent the release** of these polluting substances. If prevention is not possible there are means to **treat the**

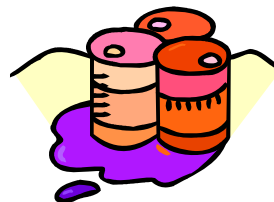
**polluting substances** to reduce the impact of the release. If polluting substances are released in harmful quantities, then the release must be **reported to the proper authority**.

### Potential Storm Water Pollution Sources

Storm drains lead directly to our lakes and streams. So, any oil, clippings, leaves, or dirty wash water that enters a storm drain gets into our lakes and streams. Small amounts from many places can add up to a big problem for our waters.

**Sediment**—Sediment is a word used to describe pollution caused by soil erosion. In other words, when soil or dirt is washed into the waterways it is called sediment. Sediment is one of the most serious water pollution problems in Michigan today. Sediment can smother the eggs of fish and aquatic insects, phosphorus attached to the soil particles can cause excessive nutrient enrichment, and bacteria in the soil can be a public health concern.

**Spills**—In the course of almost any project, various pollutants may be spilled. Examples include: oil, hydraulic fluid, gasoline or diesel, fertilizer, paint or solvents, herbicides or pesticides, and chemicals. These materials can have both immediate and long-term impacts if allowed to enter the storm drainage system.



**Landscape Debris**—Grass clippings, tree branches, mulch, top soil, and trimmings from shrubbery are frequently used or generated by landscapers. These materials often contain nutrients and sediment that can pollute surface waters and interfere with drainage system functions.

### Methods and Tools to Prevent Release of Polluting Materials

**Awareness**—Be aware of the potentially polluting materials on the job site and the drainage patterns leading to waterways. Use common sense to keep these materials away from storm water and drainage ways as much as possible.



**Be Prepared**—Before bringing potentially polluting materials onto a job site, someone present must be trained on the proper procedures for cleaning up spills. Clean-up kits must be on site.

**Proper Disposal**—Landscape debris should be swept up and taken to a landfill. Better yet, recycling or composting these materials is highly encouraged.

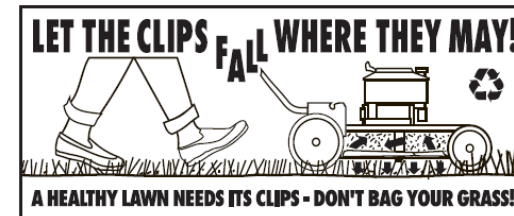
**Protect from rain**—Do not allow stockpiles and materials to be washed away by rain or blown away by wind. Keep these materials covered by tarps or secured plastic sheeting.

**Secondary Containment**—Store all oil and fuel inside a special containment area to prevent spills from reaching the environment.

**Modern Lawncare Techniques**—Tall grass encourages deep roots and also shades out crabgrass and low-growing weeds. So mow high (3") and use mulching mowers to produce less debris. Also the taller grass traps many potential pollutants. Use watering sparingly.



Sweep up or vacuum clippings from paved areas for disposal. Use only zero phosphorus fertilizers unless a soil test demonstrates a need for phosphorus. Employ only licensed pesticide applicators. Use a sharp mower blade. A dull blade will tear grass and provide an entry port for diseases. Keep the mower deck clean. Wash the underside of the mower after each use, but NOT



into a storm drain. A clogged deck won't mulch or discharge properly. Never blow grass clippings or leaves into the street. Grass