**2023 Leaf Campaign Template Article**

**POSSIBLE TITLES: Street Leaves and Water Quality, What’s the Connection? OR**

**Do You Live on a Tree-lined Street? Fall is a Key Time of Year to Take Actions to Protect Area Waters**

Did you know that removing street leaves before the rain can prevent nutrients from entering our local waters? By clearing 30 pounds of leaves from the street you can keep about two pounds of algae out of our lakes and rivers. When it rains, stormwater flows through leaf piles in streets creating a “leaf tea” that is rich in dissolved phosphorus. Dissolved phosphorus found in “leaf tea” does not settle out and cannot be easily removed. It washes down storm drains and ditches to our lakes, rivers and streams and can cause algae blooms, low oxygen levels and murky waters that are harmful to aquatic life, pets and people.

INCLUDE A SENTENCE ON WHAT YOUR MUNICIPALITY/LOCAL GROUP IS DOING TO KEEP STREETS LEAF-FREE. In the fall, timely removal of street leaves can reduce the amount of phosphorus in urban stormwater by 80% compared to no leaf removal! If you are lucky enough to live on street lined with large trees, consider taking a few minutes before the storm to help protect our waters.

 **Join us in keeping streets leaf-free this fall! It’s easy! Before the rain…**

1. **Safely remove leaves** from the street in front of your home and nearby storm drains**.**
2. INSERT YOUR COMMUNITY’S LEAF COLLECTION GUIDELINESor recycle leaves on your property.
3. **Sign up to receive Leaf-free Streets Rain Alerts** this fall (Oct. 1- Nov. 30).  Alerts will be issued (via text or email) 1-2 days before a significant rain event reminding you that it's time to remove street leaves.
4. **Request a Leaf-free Streets yard sign** and help educate others in your neighborhood.

**To learn more or to sign up for Leaf-free Streets Rain Alerts visit:** [**www.ripple-effects.com**](http://www.ripple-effects.com)**.**