

## Clean Water Checklist

The small actions of many people add up!  
Make clean water a neighborhood effort.

Check that the vegetation on the bank is:

Not mowed at least 5 feet (longer roots hold the soil better)	
Free of dumped clippings & leaves	
Free of rock or brush piles	
Free of unwanted debris	

Check that the Creek itself is:

Free of downed limbs that obstruct flow	
Free of trash	
Freely flowing	

Help prevent pollution:

Keep the ditch and nearby area minimally disturbed: even snow can have pollutants in it	
Plant long-rooted vegetation (Remember, the District needs access for bank repairs, cleaning)	
Keep grass clippings on your lawn and off impervious areas OR compost your clippings (at home, with your hauler, or at a Site**)	
Recycle motor oil & antifreeze**	
Dispose of Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) properly**	

\*\* Bunker Hills Compost site: 763.767.7964

Rice Creek Compost Site: 651.429.3723

\*\* Anoka County HHW facility: 763.323.5730



Check out [www.co.anoka.mn.us](http://www.co.anoka.mn.us)  
& look for Composting or Recycling

Please post this checklist at home.

### Credits

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## Water IQ #2

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## Coon Creek Watershed District

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### Mission

To manage groundwater and surface water drainage systems to prevent property damage, maintain hydrologic balance, protect water quality for the safety and enjoyment of citizens, and the preservation and enhancement of wildlife habitat.

## Coon Creek Watershed District

## Water IQ #2

### Living along Coon Creek



Andover youth do the Great Coon Creek Cleanup

Second in a Water Information Quest (WIQ) Series

by

Coon Creek Watershed District

Tel: 763.755.0975

## Water Quality

Living along Coon Creek & its drainage ditches provides homeowners with the benefits of increased privacy, wildlife sightings, and a natural backdrop to one's yard. With those benefits are also responsibilities for protecting water quality directly. Why?

Pollutants from your yard can flow to the Mississippi River, adding to the pollution of downstream communities. And, with an elevation change of less than 5 feet along upper Coon Creek, an obstruction in the creek can affect folks with flooding and erosion *upstream* as well as downstream.

It's up to all of us to do our part in protecting the water quality in our area. Living on a ditch provides you with a unique chance to directly impact its water quality. Minimize pollutants and keep the Creek or ditch free of debris.



Use the checklist in this pamphlet as a guide.



**The Good:** natural vegetation has long-roots that can prevent bank erosion, filter pollutants, and provide wildlife habitat.

## Concerns/Violations

To protect water quality, the Coon Creek Watershed District (CCWD) has standards to meet for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits. Consequently, CCWD has the legal authority to prohibit dumping in or along creeks or drainage ditches. This includes the dumping of grass clippings, a big source of phosphorus pollution.

**Considered Illicit Discharges, penalties can be imposed by Cities for these types of dumping:**

- Grass clippings
- Motor oil & fluids
- Toxic materials (such as paint & pesticides)

CCWD will also be investigating such violations along the Creek and drainage ditches in the future. If reported, CCWD staff will log the information and may investigate the site. A Stop Work Order or Restoration Order may be issued to ensure the long-term integrity of the Creek or ditch and its water quality.

**Altering the bank of a creek or ditch alters the flooding capacity of the channel and may cause erosion. A permit is needed prior to any alteration.**

*Questions? 763.755.0975*



**The Bad:** dumped grass clippings add excess phosphorus directly to water. A better practice, and less work, is to mow high & compost clippings on your lawn.

## What You Can Do

Help protect water quality:

1. Have a strip of long-rooted vegetation at least 5 feet wide along the top of the bank. This strip of vegetation can help filter out excess nutrients, contaminants, and sediment from runoff.
2. Keep the ditch bank clear of grass clippings, leaves, brush & rock piles, and trash. Why?
  - one bushel of grass clippings can contain 0.1 pound of phosphorus; that can produce 30 to 50 pounds of algae
  - grass clippings can have **4 to 5 times more** phosphorus than fallen autumn leaves
  - debris can fall in the ditch, obstructing flow
  - debris may compact the soil
3. Keep impervious surfaces (such as sidewalks, patios, driveways & streets) free of material that could wash into the street, stormsewer, or directly into the ditch. Some examples:
  - Motor oil & fluids
  - Pesticides, herbicides
  - Landscaping & remodeling debris
  - Grass clippings, leaves, brush



**The Ugly:** grass clippings in the street can wash into nearby waterways which promotes algal growth and degrades water quality, ruining wildlife habitat.