

Water Resources Center

Menu ☰

Clean sweep program



There's a surprisingly simple and proven solution to stormwater pollution: enhanced street sweeping.

Street sweeping is a commonly used practice across Minnesota to provide a healthy, safe, and attractive environment for residents and visitors. While regular removal of litter and dirt from our streets and curbs is necessary to prevent storm drains from clogging and flooding, street sweeping can also be used to protect water quality by reducing leaf litter, trash, dirt, and other pollutants from entering our water resources.

Research by University of Minnesota Professor [Sarah Hobbie](#) in 2022 demonstrated that street sweeping is an effective method for reducing phosphorus in stormwater. Street sweeping equipment removes leaves and other organic debris from streets that can be a significant source of phosphorus before it gets into storm drains and then to our lakes and rivers.

The University of Minnesota Water Resources Center and Minnesota Sea Grant have partnered with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to develop the Clean Sweep Program which provides resources and training to communities to initiate street sweeping programs that will help them meet their water quality goals by targeting their efforts where it counts the most. The Clean Sweep project team used a series of surveys, focus groups, and case studies to help

develop the Clean Sweep Education and Training Program in 2022 and the program continues to grow.

Article: [A Sweeping Solution to Stormwater Pollution](#)

Upcoming events

Sweeping and Salting SHOWDOWN - Equipment showcase

Wednesday, August 28, 2024

9:00am - 1:30pm

Minnetonka Public Works Facility

[Registration required](#) to attend

The showcase will highlight equipment options so that cities, communities, and agencies can make wise investments into their sweeping and salting programs that will reduce the amount of nutrients and salt entering stormwater systems and improve the water quality of Minnesota's water resources.

The Showdown event includes:

- Presentations by the U of M, MPCA, Hamline University, and the City of Minnetonka on addressing water quality through enhanced street sweeping, smart salting, and Adopt-a-Drain, and an overview of Minnetonka's smart salting operations
- A "showdown" between different vehicles and equipment options:
 - [Street sweepers](#): observing first-hand how effectively each vehicle cleans the streets; direct Q&A with equipment vendors
 - [De-icing equipment](#): displays and demos of salting and brining equipment; learning from the operators
 - [Brine production and de-icing operations tour](#) by City of Minnetonka
- *Optional Reclaimed Wood Tour: 1:30pm - 2:00pm*

The City of Minnetonka will walk participants through their program to reclaim wood from fallen trees and ash trees for lumber.

Who should attend:

- Public works directors and staff

- Program directors at watershed organizations and SWCDs
 - State agency staff, including those that administer grant funding for equipment
 - Environmental professionals
 - Public and private property owners and managers
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Lunch & Learn: Materials reuse
July, Date TBD

Lunch & Learn: Equipment showdown
August, Date TBD

Lunch & Learn: TMDL reporting
September, Date TBD

Lunch & Learn: Developing an enhanced street sweeping plan
October, Date TBD

Lunch & Learn: Waste management guidance
November, Date TBD

Lunch & Learn: Public engagement tools and resources
December, Date TBD

Learn more

Discover more information about street sweeping on the MPCA and U of M's websites:

- Information and guidance on street sweeping: MPCA's [Minnesota Stormwater Manual website](#).
- Street sweeping research projects funded through the Minnesota Stormwater Research and Technology Transfer Program: [U of M WRC project's website](#).

Get Notified: [Sign up for UPDATES email newsletters](#).

Presentations

- [Street Sweeping Research Overview](#)
- [Key Considerations for Developing an Enhanced Street Sweeping Program](#)
- [Forest Lake Street Sweeping Program](#)
- [Disposal & Reuse of Street Sweepings](#)

Handouts and reference information

- [Minnesota Stormwater Manual: Street Sweeping](#)
- [MPCA Street Sweeping Phosphorus Credit Calculator](#)
- [Quick Estimating Tool for Total Solids and Phosphorus](#)
- [LSCWP Tree Canopy Assessment Protocol](#)
- [Overview on Characteristics & Capabilities of Street-Class Power Sweepers](#)
- [Street Sweeping Materials: Management Options](#)

Future "Lunch and Learn" events

May: Enhanced Street Sweeping 101

June: Financial Case for Street Sweeping

July: Materials Reuse: Panel Discussion & Listening Session

September: TMDL Reporting

October: Developing an Enhanced Street Sweeping Plan

November: Waste Management Guidance

"Lunch and Learns" will be held at different locations around the Twin Cities metro area. Lunch will be provided.

Contact us

If you have any questions about the Clean Sweep Education & Training Program, [please contact Maggie Karschnia](#).

Water Resources Center

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The Water Resources Center is a unit of the [College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences](#) and [University of Minnesota Extension](#).

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