Stormwater Regulations

City of Wilmington Ordinance: DEBRIS IN THE DRAINAGE SYSTEM

Effective September 15, 2009

Chapter 12 - Utilities

Debris is defined in the city code as yard debris (i.e. grass clippings, leaves, pine straw, etc), sediment, trash, litter or debris of any kind. Debris can cause significant water quality problems when it is blown, directed, or otherwise finds its way into the storm drainage system. Yard debris adds nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorous) to waterways causing aquatic weed growth, algal blooms, oxygen depletion, fish kills and impaired aquatic habitat. In addition, when the stormwater system is clogged with yard waste, litter, sediment, etc., it can cause street and property flooding.

The City's Debris Ordinance specifies:

- It is unlawful to rake, sweep, blow, wash, direct or place any debris into the storm drainage system.
  (*The storm drainage system consists of streets, storm drains, ditches, swales, creeks, lakes, rights-of-way, dedicated easements, etc).*
- Property owners shall keep all ditches, drains, swales, and other drainageways on their property free from obstructions which would impede the flow of water.
- **Fines for non-compliance with the City's debris ordinance are $250 per occurrence.**

Suggested best practices for dealing with yard waste, litter, sediment and other debris:

- Direct or blow yard debris back onto a lawn or landscape area.
- Sweep, rake, and/or collect yard waste, sediment and other debris off of hard surfaces so it can't wash away when it rains.
- Grasscycle - leave grass clippings on the lawn to decompose quickly and act as a natural fertilizer and to conserve moisture in the soil.
- Compost yard debris to use in the lawn, garden, or landscape.
- Collect and contain yard debris for city collection, following specific yard debris collection policies. Do not use the city trash cart for yard debris.
- Collect and dispose of yard debris at a legally authorized yard waste collection facility.
- Properly dispose of trash and litter.