

## Is There a Creek or Stream on Your Property?

### Stream Guidelines

Do you have a creek or stream on your property? If you do, then you are responsible for maintenance of the stream just like any other part of your property. Neither the City nor MSD is responsible for creeks that are located on private property. MSD will investigate blocked creek complaints; however, MSD will only remove debris that is deemed a flooding threat. MSD will not remove typical debris or branches that are not considered a flooding hazard. The City does not have the manpower or budget to clear debris from streams. This is the responsibility of the property owner.

A healthy stream can be a wonderful asset to any property. It has aesthetic value that can add real value to your property. A healthy stream can provide habitat and greenways for animals to travel through. While it does provide storm water relief, it can also recharge groundwater.

On the other hand, an unhealthy stream can lower property values. The goal of this article is to provide landowners with some guidelines on activities that adversely affect a stream, and also provide some Best Management Practices (BMPs) for healthy streams.

Some BMPs include:

- Remove woody debris to prevent streambank erosion and accumulation that may lead to clogging of culverts.
- Never dump gasoline, motor oil, antifreeze, battery acid, or other automotive fluids into a stream or storm drain.
- Dispose of unusable paints and paint products at your local household hazardous waste facility.
- Avoid washing your car on a paved driveway or street that drains to a stream. Use a commercial car wash.
- The best way to drain your swimming pool is to let the chlorine dissipate by allowing the water to sit for up to two weeks and then drain onto landscaping.
- If your downspouts are piped to a stream, consider redirecting the flow onto a grassed area to allow infiltration.
- ***Never dump grass, leaves or tree limbs on the banks of the stream or into the stream.*** Please utilize the City's leaf and brush collection programs.
- Do not overfertilize your lawn, so chemicals do not runoff into the stream.

One landowner can make a difference on his or her own property. However, the problems seen in the stream are most often symptoms of changes or actions taking place elsewhere in the watershed. The City is part of the Deer Creek watershed. You may want to become active on a watershed basis. Information on the Deer Creek Watershed Alliance can be found at <https://www.deercreekalliance.org/>.

Information for this article was taken from Stream Care Guide: An Owner's Manual Designed for Streamside Landowners published by the Soil and Water Conservation District of St. Louis County, Missouri. The manual can be found at <https://dnr.mo.gov/pubs/pub1192.pdf>.