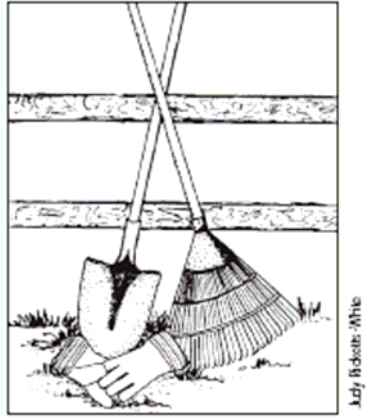


## ***Protect Water Quality in Your Own Yard in Every Season!***

### ***Summer***



- Avoid wasting water. Invest in a rain gauge and keep track of weekly rainfall. Most plants and the lawn are happy with one inch of water a week, so keep the hose coiled up when the rain has been coming down.
- A thick (at least two inches) layer of mulch in gardens, around shrubs and under trees prevents evaporation of water from the soil, keeping the ground cooler and plants happier. Thick mulch layers also inhibit weed seed germination. Just don't mulch heat-loving vegetables like tomatoes and squash until the soil temperature is high enough or they won't thrive. Organic mulches provide some nutrients as they decompose, reducing the need for fertilizers.
- Avoid lawn stress. Keep the lawn mower blade sharp, mow often enough that no more than one-third of the grass blade is cut off at a time, and try to mow when the grass is completely dry. A mulching mower blade recycles grass clippings while mowing, returning moisture and nutrients to the soil and reducing the need for fertilizer.
- Cut down on chemicals. Cut down on or eliminate fertilizer use. Upgrade your soils by adding composted organic matter rather than chemicals that may damage the natural microbial communities in the soil and promote pest problems. Use "Integrated Pest Management" or IPM strategies to reduce the need for toxic pesticides.

**To learn more or report possible illegal discharges to the storm drain system, call the Village of Beecher at (708) 946-2261.**

(Source: Clean Water Fact Sheet, produced by NEMO and Sea Grant Connecticut)