Watershed One-liners

Communicating best practices in short sound bites while covering the MS4 bases.

Winter maintenance:

* When salting is necessary, strive for 3” between grains of salt – salt melts more than what the crystal touches.
* If you see leftover salt on dry pavement, it was overdone.
* 1 teaspoon of rock salt permanently pollutes 5 gallons of freshwater.
* Don’t wait for the storm to end! Shovel early and often to reduce the need to apply salt and dodge the heavy lifting.

Lawncare:

* Turf only needs about 1”/week to survive – this includes watering plus rainfall.
* Odd/even watering days are helpful to reduce peak flow, but don’t automatically mean you should water that day. Paying attention to what the lawn needs and striving for 1”/week keeps the lawn alive while conserving water for more important uses.
* Try allowing your lawn to go dormant in dry periods – turf is able to go dormant in the summer similar to winter dormancy, and will green up again when rain returns.
* Mowing at a 3” height is one of the most effective and easiest ways to retain moisture on the lawn, helping to buffer dry times.
* Mowing at a 3” height helps to shelter soil, resist weeds, absorb air pollutants, and keep nutrients where they belong (on land and out of water).
* To support clean lakes and healthy wetlands from home, sweep grass clippings off pavement and back up onto the lawn.
* Mulching leaves into the lawn with a mower for an entire fall season is roughly equivalent to an application of fertilizer.
* Skipping spring fertilizing encourages turf to invest more in roots than in blade growth – this means reduced mowing and a more resilient yard for the rest of the year.

Other:

* Try washing your car on the lawn to reduce soapy runoff – it’ll help protect local lakes and wetlands, and may start a fun conversation with a neighbor!
* Neglected pet waste can take up to 1 year to break down, all the while sending excess nutrients and harmful bacteria and pathogens into local waterbodies, plus needlessly exposing people and pets to these health risks.
* 1 lb of phosphorus can generate up to 500 lbs of algae. Keeping grass clippings out of the street and never dumping them in ditches or wetlands keeps phosphorus where it belongs – out of the water and in the soil.
* Everyone has waterfront property – your boulevard and nearest stormdrain connect directly to a lake, stream, or wetland without treatment.
* Stormponds are designed to catch sediment and excess nutrients before the water from nearby development gets to a lake, stream, or wetland. Unsightly stormponds may be due for maintenance, but this also means they’ve done their job.
* Only rain down the drain.