

# HERON LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT

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## THE PROBLEM

Nutrient pollution is one of the most serious problems for Minnesota's waterbodies. A major source of nutrient pollution is the organic debris found in our neighborhood streets – leaves, grass clippings, twigs, and dirt. In the spring and the fall, leaves and organic material settle on our streets. They decay and are washed into storm drains. Every time it rains, organic debris washes down community storm sewers, which empty into local lakes, rivers, and streams without being treated or filtered. Organic debris fuels the overgrowth of many, many tons of harmful aquatic plants, including noxious algae. Forty percent of Minnesota's lakes, rivers, and streams have been degraded by runoff and other contaminants.

Pollution in our lakes, rivers, and streams is caused by excess phosphorus, sediment, and nutrients. One of the best ways to reduce pollution is to remove decaying organic matter (leaves, sand, etc.) from city streets and parking lots before it has a chance to wash down city storm sewers.



## WHAT YOU CAN DO

The Heron Lake Watershed District is promoting *Community Clean-Ups for Water Quality*. *Community Clean-Ups for Water Quality* is a program developed and led by the Freshwater Society in partnership with the Friends of the Minnesota Valley. Through this program, residents are asked to clean the stretch of street and boulevard in front of their homes, bag the debris, and take them to the compost site. For more information, please visit the Fresh Water Society website at [freshwater.org](http://freshwater.org).

*Community Clean-Ups for Water Quality* have been sponsored for years by Friends of the Minnesota Valley. The Freshwater Society is helping to take the volunteer effort to organizations across the state as part of *2010 - The Year of Water*, a statewide initiative to raise awareness and promote action to protect, conserve, and restore Minnesota's waters.

*Just five bags of organic debris can contain one pound of phosphorus, which in turn can fuel as much as 1,000 pounds of algae!*



## WHY COMMUNITY CLEAN-UPS FOR WATER QUALITY ARE IMPORTANT

**Storm drains empty directly into streams, rivers, and lakes. Rain and melting snow carry leaves, yard debris, and sand from streets into those waters. As the organic matter decays, excess phosphorus pollutes lakes and rivers. The phosphorus causes excessive growth of algae and decreases oxygen levels in the water. By removing leaves from yards in the spring or fall, you can significantly reduce pollution and protect water quality.**

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Heron Lake Watershed District  
PO Box 345  
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Heron Lake Watershed



**WATERSHED  
ASSISTANCE  
THROUGH  
EDUCATION &  
RESOURCES**

## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

**November 16, 2010**

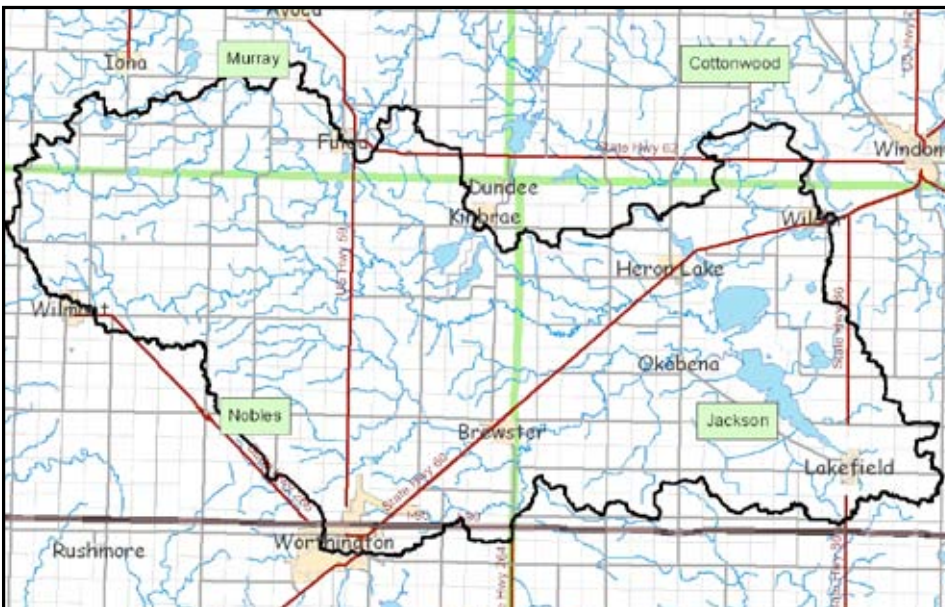
**HLWD board meeting**

**7:00 p.m. at the HLWD office**

Note that the HLWD board meeting dates and times are tentative. Please contact the HLWD office for the exact date and time.

**HERON LAKE WATERSHED DISTRICT**

Funding for the newsletter is provided by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency through a Clean Water Partnership Grant. Please contact us with your questions or concerns! Telephone 507-793-2462; Email: [hlwd@roundlk.net](mailto:hlwd@roundlk.net)



**MAP OF THE  
HERON LAKE  
WATERSHED  
DISTRICT**