



Fall into Fun: Tree Planting and Stormwater Tips for Autumn

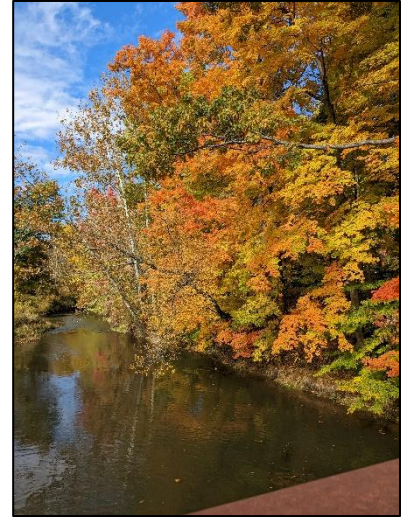
As Ohio's fall unfolds with vibrant leaves and shorter days, it's the perfect time to tackle stormwater management with tree planting! Cooler temperatures and autumn rain create ideal conditions for root growth, helping trees establish in spring before summer's heat. A medium-sized tree can soak up 2,300 gallons of rainwater yearly, reducing runoff into storm sewers and protecting our streams and lakes.

Why Plant Trees in Fall?

Fall is ideal for planting trees and shrubs in Ohio due to chilly temperatures and autumn rains, which promote root establishment in cool soil. This reduces the need for watering and helps trees withstand next summer's heat. Planting native vegetation allows water to infiltrate soil which replenishes groundwater, reduces flooding, and minimizes stormwater loading into storm sewers.

Trees also stabilize soil, can raise property value, provide wildlife habitat, lower summer temperatures, improve air quality, and enhance aesthetics. To plant successfully:

- Dig a hole 2-3 times wider than the root ball but no deeper, ensuring the root flare (where roots meet trunk) sits at ground level when planted.
- Loosen the root ball to encourage growth; avoid planting in small or deep holes, which are common issues that lead to trees failing to establish.
- Water thoroughly and slowly, mulch 3 inches deep around the base while keeping mulch 6 inches away from the trunk, and protect young trees from deer with trunk guards or caging for the first few years.



Managing Fallen Leaves

Instead of raking leaves into streets or ditches where they can clog storm drains, contribute to flooding, and carry pollutants into waterways, opt for eco-friendly alternatives like mulching leaves in place with a lawnmower which allows them to act as a fertilizer, compost them for garden use, or leave them in wooded areas for natural decomposition.

For more information visit www.crowp.org