



Students help clean city streets, prevent pollution to neighboring lake

On Saturday Oct. 30, a group of about 25 Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools (PLSAS) students made a commitment to improve water quality in local neighborhoods. The students from the PLSAS Eco Team and National Honor Society gathered on the south end of Upper Prior Lake to clean up leaves and other organic debris from the streets, storm drains and boulevards. The group of students collected 124 bags of leaves and organic debris. Without the cleanup, the leaves would have washed down into the storm drains and emptied directly into Upper Prior Lake. Leaves, grass clippings and other organic debris contain phosphorus, a pollutant for our lakes and rivers. When leaves and organic debris decay, they provide excess nutrients that stimulate algae growth. Excessive algae blooms degrade water quality.



The 124 bags of leaves and organic debris equate to removing nearly 25 pounds of phosphorus from Upper Prior Lake (25 pounds of phosphorus can produce nearly 25,000 pounds of algae). That is a significant amount of pollution prevented from entering Upper Prior Lake. The collected leaves will be composted, courtesy of Dick's Sanitation. Dick's Sanitation also donated trash bags for the event and a roll-off dumpster unit for transporting the collected debris to a compost facility.

Residents in the neighborhood where the Community Clean Up for Water Quality event occurred also chipped in by raking and bagging leaves for the students to collect. Even though the City of Prior Lake has an aggressive street-sweeping program, it is still important for residents to do their part and keep streets clean. Clean streets mean clean water. The Scott Clean Water Education Program coordinated the clean-up event, with support from the Freshwater Society and Friends of the Minnesota Valley. If you'd like to organize your own neighborhood Community Clean Up for Water Quality, contact Dan Miller with the Scott Clean Water Education Program at (952) 492-5424 or dmiller@co.scott.mn.us.

