Homeowner Tips for Helping the Environment*

- Collect leaves, sticks, grass clippings, or other yard debris and place them in a compost bin or a leaf bag to be picked up by your community. Yard waste that flows directly into storm drains can clog them, causing sewer back ups and flooding.

- Disconnect downspouts and direct them away from paved surfaces. Install a rain barrel or rain garden to hold the water on site. Information about rain garden installation can be found at www.raingardenallaince.org. Remember, Etna has an ordinance governing this, which can get you a discount on your sewer Environmental Surcharge of $5.00 a quarter.

- Plant trees or other vegetation on your property, especially in bare spots. Avoid planting trees near known sewer lines to prevent root growth into pipes.

- Don't use storm drains as trash cans. Litter can clog catch basins and storm drains preventing them from doing their job.

- Decrease water usage when it rains. This extra water can overload the sewer system. If you can, wait up to 24 hours to run your dishwasher or do your laundry.

- Pick up after your pet and dispose of pet waste in the trash can. Pet wastes contain nutrients and bacteria that are harmful to waterways and human health.

- Recycle or properly dispose of used motor oil, chemicals, prescriptions, and batteries so that they don't contaminate our waterways. The PA Resources Council has information about what to do with hard to dispose of items. http://www.zerowastepgh.org/ZW-hcw-resources.html

- Wash your vehicle at a car wash or pull your vehicle into a vegetated area in your yard if you are going to wash it at home to prevent pollutants from being washed into the storm sewer system.

- Don't put fats, oils, or grease down the drain because they can solidify, clogging drains and sewer pipes and creating backups. Throw greasy strips into the trash instead of down a garbage disposal.