



Supplied photo by Laura Taylor

Don't let your storm debris contribute to unsightly debris dams on the Seine River.

Don't add to Seine River debris dams



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Winnipeg is used to weathering winter storms but three days of wet snow and strong winds in early October wreaked havoc on city trees. Deciduous trees were not ready for this onslaught of winter. They had not yet dropped their leaves and the wet snow stuck to the leaves, causing many branches to break under the added weight.

While the city is dealing with broken trees on public land, private landowners are dealing with similar woody debris on their land. The mayor has asked homeowners to stop dumping broken branches on streets and boulevards in the hope that the city will take them away at no cost.

Save Our Seine (SOS) is asking property owners near the Seine River to refrain from piling branches on riverbanks in the hope that the river will carry them away at no cost.

There actually is a cost — but the river and SOS pay the price.

Branches piled too close to the river will be

catches more garbage, litter, and mud. A pool of stagnant water will form upstream of the blockage. Algae will cover the pool with a green “scum” that stinks as it decomposes. Et voila! A few broken branches thoughtlessly discarded on the riverbank combine to create an unsightly, foul-smelling debris dam.

Next spring, SOS will survey the locations of debris dams along the Seine River. If grants are approved through Urban Green Team and Canada Summer Jobs, SOS will recruit a team of River Keepers to begin clearing the debris dams in June. It could take all summer before the river is clean and navigable.

Hundreds of private properties line the Seine River. If you live on one of these properties, please keep your storm debris out of the river to help prevent debris dams. Dispose of smaller branches (maximum of 10 centimetres diameter and one metre long) with your regular yard waste. Go to www.winnipeg.ca to find your pick-up day. Drop off larger branches, stumps, and logs at any 4R Depot.

Removing debris dams from 26 kilometres of river is difficult and expensive work — requiring gas, special equipment and people. Donations made toward the annual clean-up of the Seine are always gratefully accepted.