



# **Rake it or leave it - What to do with your leaves and grass clippings**

## **Why does it matter?**

You choose—your leaves and grass clippings can be a valuable resource or a source of water pollution.

### **As a resource...**

**Mulched leaves or grass clippings on your lawn add valuable nutrients and organic matter.**

Grass clippings provide a source of slow-release nutrients reducing the amount of fertilizer needed to none or at least half. A thin layer of mulched leaves will break down and add much needed organic matter.

**Composting leaves and grass clippings saves money.**

Compost is natural recycling. Compost soil can be used as a top dressing on your lawn or garden beds reducing or eliminating the need for fertilizer.

### **As a source of water pollution...**

**Decaying leaves and grass can negatively impact aquatic creatures and organisms in water bodies.**

As organic matter decomposes in the streambeds and use up oxygen that other organisms such as dragonfly larvae, crabs, and fish need to live.

**Yard waste on stream banks smothers natural vegetation.**

Leaves or grass dumped on the shoreline

block sunlight and smother the natural plant life that provide food cover to animals such as turtles, ducks, chipmunks, and deer.

**Yard waste near water bodies releases nutrients causing increased algae and odors.**

Nutrients in yard waste placed near water ways will slowly make their way into the water stimulating algae growth and other nuisance weeds that form foul-smelling, green mats on the water surface and degrade water quality.

## **What You Can Do:**

Remove the bag from your lawnmower or use a mulching lawnmower to add nutrients to your lawn and to avoid having to dispose of the grass clippings. This will also reduce the need for fertilizers.

Never dispose of leaves or clippings in or near storm drains, drainage channels (where water drains rain or melting snow), wetlands or water bodies.

Drop off your yard waste to be composted at the Londonderry Drop Off Center located at 13 Recovery Way (off of West Road), open seasonally on Saturday's from mid-April through Mid-November, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

For more information contact the Department of Public Works at 603-432-1100 X193 or visit the Town's website at [LondonderryNH.org](http://LondonderryNH.org)