

# STORMWATER

TIP OF THE WEEK WEEK 44 - NOVEMBER 1, 2022

## WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THOSE LEAVES

The leaves are falling and their improper disposal can pose a threat our community and local water ways. Here are some great and fun ways to deal with all those fall leaves!



Fall leaves are like a big load of organic fertilizer strewn about your yard. If those nutrients were bagged and sold, you'd pay money for them. In your yard, they're free -- except for the labor of gathering them.

Fall leaves are full of nutrients that many plants can use, and this includes your lawn. Use your mower to turn your leaves into tiny pieces that settle in your lawn. These will decompose and provide an all-natural lawn food.

You can start to prepare your garden beds for the next year by adding leaves to them to build soil over the winter in those beds.

You can use leaves to insulate your plants for winter. If you have a tender plant that needs a blanket for the winter months, build a cage around the plant, add leaves, and let them help your plants through the winter. This is a particularly good technique in climates that are cold but not wet, so damp leaves will not lead to rot on your plants.

Use fall leaves, unshelled nuts, branches with berries, and other fall garden treasures to make creative dining table centerpieces. Make place cards by writing dinner guests' names on the pretty leaves using a paint pen or permanent marker.

Collect pretty leaves and iron them between sheets of waxed paper. Mount on mat board and frame them for free holiday decor.

Make a scarecrow by stuffing leaves into old clothes or even burlap bags. Set the scarecrow in a lawn chair by your front door to amuse the mailman.

Make a big pile of leaves in your front yard and I mean a BIG pile. Then jump in it, with or without your kids. When your neighbors stop to stare, invite them to jump in, too.

Need confetti? Gather up some leaves, get a fun paper punch (or a few) from the local craft store and start punching out shapes. Using leaf confetti is a lot better for the environment than plastic confetti that can take years and years to break down.

Raking leaves into the street will only create more issues like (1) leaves can cause localized flooding if they clog storm drains and pipes (2) leaves can cause pollution of local streams and waterways by adding too much nitrogen and phosphorus into our water ways. Please, help protect our community and nearby waterways from excess nutrients by properly maintaining your property's fall foliage.

