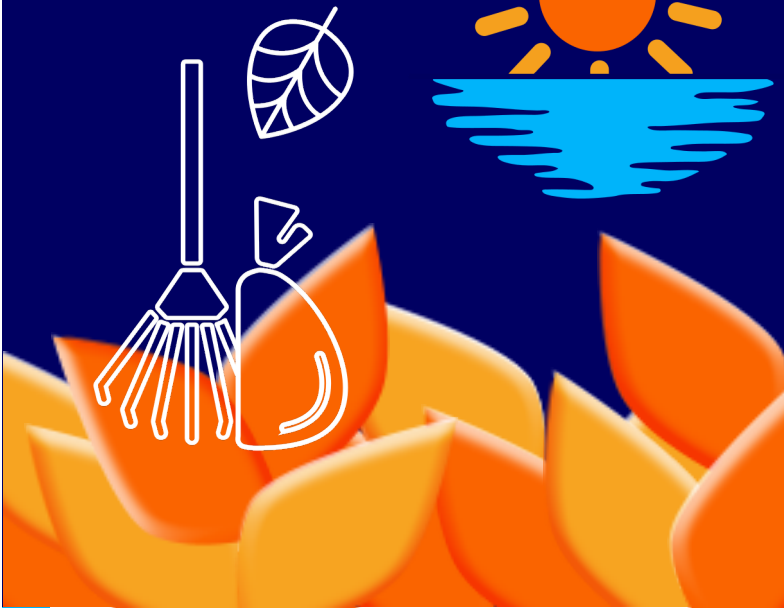


# Rake it. Mulch it. Bag it. Don't dump it.

Protect our community.



NEW HAMPSHIRE  
STORMWATER  
COALITION  
COLLABORATION  
FOR CLEAN WATER

## Leaf Loads Matter

Everyone loves New Hampshire's vibrant fall foliage! The fallen autumn leaves are beautiful, and highlight nature's natural plant cycles. How we manage the leaves that fall in our yards and neighborhoods matter.

Leaves left in roads, along curb lines or ditches wash into storm drains and nearby waterbodies. When leaves and yard waste wash into waterbodies, they break down and release nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus. These nutrients are a natural part of healthy lakes, rivers and streams — but when too much enters at once, these nutrients can throw the system off balance. Excess nutrients fuel rapid aquatic plant and algae growth that blocks sunlight and reduces the oxygen that fish and aquatic organisms need to survive, leading to stressed or degraded ecosystems.

## QUICK TIPS | FALL CLEAN-UP

- Manage yard waste at home: rake, mulch, tarp or bag materials.
- Compost your leaves and grass clippings for free, nutrient dense, natural fertilizer!
- Check your community's yard-waste collection schedule and guidelines.
- Obtain a fire permit from your local forest fire warden or fire department before burning.  
Remember: Fires must be attended at all times and fully extinguished when finished.

## What you can do!

Instead of raking leaves into the street, mulch them into your lawn, compost them at home or use approved yard-waste bags where required. Don't forget to be mindful of your local drainage systems and waterbodies! Is there a catch basin nearby or a drainpipe? Avoid piling leaves near waterbodies, in ditches or near pipes. In rural areas, leaf or brush burning should only happen with the proper local permit and under approved conditions. Do your part to protect our community: **Rake it. Mulch it. Bag it. Don't dump it.**



As part of the USEPA's 2017 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) in New Hampshire, the Town of Durham is required to educate residents and businesses on pollution prevention. This fact sheet is intended to fulfill permit requirements.



Visit the [UNH Cooperative Extension webpage](#) for more information