



CNY Stormwater Coalition

Gardens and Gutters

A Central New Yorker's Guide to Managing Stormwater Runoff

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Fantastic Fall Foliage

Autumn in Central New York is a beautiful season! Clear blue skies, crisp temperatures and vibrantly colored trees help ease the transition from the bright warmth of summer to the dark cold of winter. Unfortunately, all that treetop beauty can come back to haunt us throughout the winter and spring if we don't properly address those falling leaves now.

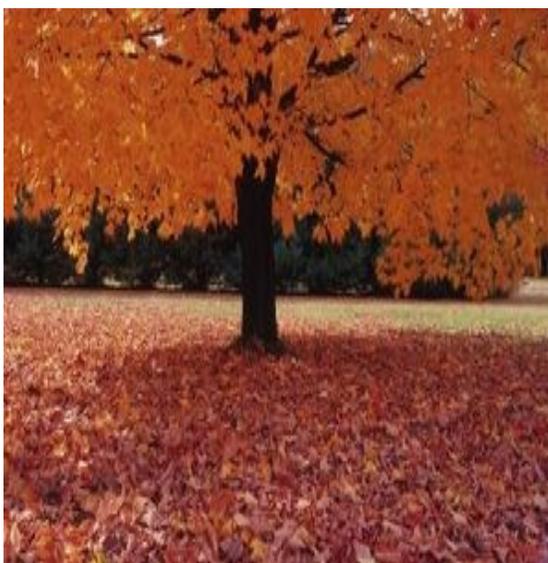
When leaves and yard clippings are raked into the street, they can clog storm drains causing localized flooding during heavy rains or snow melt. Leaves and grass clippings that make their way to local streams and rivers release nutrients that contribute to the accelerated growth of algae. This can be harmful to fish and other aquatic wildlife.

Although not too many people enjoy autumn weekends raking a yard full of leaves, raking might become a little more bearable if you know that you can use those leaves to improve your lawn and garden while reducing the threat of spring time flooding and nutrient loading to local waterbodies.

An easy and beneficial way to deal with leaves is by mulching them back onto your lawn. Simply mow the leaves and leave them on the lawn. The mower will chop the leaves into small pieces that will decompose and provide valuable nutrients to the soil.

Add autumn leaves to a compost pile or place them in planting beds or gardens to provide an inexpensive and nutrient rich fertilizer for your garden. Composting is nature's truest form of recycling. See page 3 to learn how to make Leaf Mold for a healthier yard and garden next spring!

If leaves cannot be disposed of on your property, check with your municipality to find out if a leaf collection service is available. Always follow the curbside pick up schedule for your neighborhood. Some municipalities require that you bag the leaves in paper for pick up, and others have placement requirements for leaf piles. Either way, leaves should never be placed in the storm drain, gutter or street. Prepare the leaves by placing them in piles on your lawn that are parallel to the road.



Now is the Time to Button Up for Winter

Ice Problems? Go Pervious!

Replacing your walkway or driveway with river stone, pervious pavers or other porous material will allow water to soak into the ground instead of becoming runoff. Permeable interlocking concrete (concrete pavers separated by joints), pervious concrete, and porous asphalt have many advantages during the winter months when compared to conventional pavements.

- Snow melts faster on pervious pavements than on conventional pavements.
- Pervious pavements immediately drain the melted snow, reducing the risk of ice formation and hazards.
- Permeable interlocking concrete and porous asphalt are resistant to freeze-thaw cycles and require smaller amounts of de-icing materials.
- Pervious surfaces help reduce polluted stormwater runoff and erosion.

Winter Rain Garden Protection

Even though your plants are dormant throughout the winter months, avoid shoveling snow onto your established rain garden. When the snow melts in the spring, the excess water can saturate the soil and harm your plants. Normal snow accumulation won't create a problem, but when shoveling your driveway or walkway, place the snow on the uphill side of the rain garden. The garden will absorb the excess runoff as the snow melts in the spring.



Winter Rain Barrel Storage

Winter is several weeks away, but now is the time to prepare your rain barrel for winter storage. If you have the space, unhook the rain barrel from the downspout and store it in a garage or shed. If space isn't available, you can leave the rain barrel outdoors during the winter if you prepare it for the elements.

First, completely drain the rain barrel to avoid freezing or cracking. Then remove the spigots, screen, and hose and store them in a place where you can find them easily in the spring. You may also want to rinse out the rain barrel in order to remove any sediment. If you are storing the rain barrel outside, turn it upside down to keep out the rain, ice and snow. If possible, weight it down or secure it to keep it from blowing away. After you've prepped the rain barrel for winter storage, consider redirecting the downspout so that melting snow and ice flows away from the foundation of your home. Attach another piece of downspout if necessary.

How to Make Leaf Mold or 4-Simple Steps to a Super Summer Landscape

Leaves are a valuable natural resource. Rather than regard them as a nuisance, be grateful that the trees on your property drop a new supply every fall. It takes very little effort on your part to recycle them into a wonderful soil conditioner -- leaf mold -- for the yard and garden. Unlike compost, leaf mold is only partially decomposed, leaving bits and pieces of the leaves visible in the finished product. Unlike compost, leaf mold is derived only from leaves.

You can make leaf mold the same way nature creates it on the forest floor. Just pile up moist leaves and wait for them to decompose. If you want to speed up the process, you can shred the leaves into smaller pieces before piling them up. Enclose the pile, if you wish, with snow fencing, chicken wire, or something similar to improve its appearance. Make sure the container allows air to circulate, because oxygen fuels the decomposition process. Over the winter, the pile will shrink as decay reduces the volume of leaves -- a sign that the process is well under way.

Spread leaf mold on top of bare soil as an organic mulch. It keeps the soil from being compacted by hard rains and drying sunshine. It helps the soil retain moisture by decreasing evaporation, absorbing rain, and reducing wasteful runoff. Leaf mold gradually breaks down in the heat of summer, so renew the mulch layer whenever it becomes thin. Leaves are a valuable natural resource.

Leaf mold helps build healthy soil in several ways. When mixed into poor soil, it improves its texture. The coarse organic material creates air spaces in the soil, making it easier for roots to penetrate. Leaf mold also improves the soil's ability to absorb moisture and keep it available longer for plant roots. As the leaves continue to decompose, they improve the soil's fertility by creating a population of active microbes. Leaves are a favorite food of earthworms, which convert the leaves into nutrient-rich castings that are distributed throughout the soil.

Discouraging Weeds

Leaf mold mulch does an effective job of discouraging weeds if you remove existing weeds from the area first. Spread a thick layer of leaf mold to block the sun from seeds that remain in the soil. The layer can

be thinner in shaded areas where weeds are less bothersome. Leaf mold should not be spread deeper than 3 or 4 inches over three roots.

What You Need:

- Chicken wire
- Tall stakes
- Sledge hammer
- Leaf rack
- Mulching mower
- Compost fork
- Wheelbarrow or garden cart

Instructions

1. **Set up a wire cylinder or similar container** to hold the accumulated leaves you'll be collecting. (It will help keep the wind from blowing the leaves around.) If necessary, add stakes for stability.
2. **The smaller the pieces of organic material**, the faster they decompose. Shred leaves by mowing the lawn where they lie with a mulching mower, then raking. Or rake them into a pile and mow over it.
3. **Load the shredded leaves into the cylinder.** (Those that are damp will decompose faster.) Don't compress the leaves in the container, because good airflow promotes decomposition.
4. **When spring comes around**, the leaves in the center of the pile will be fairly decomposed and those on the outside less so. As you transfer the leaves to a wheelbarrow or cart, be sure to mix the various layers before you spread them.



Adapted from Better Home and Gardens, "Preparing Your Garden for Winter"

The CNY Stormwater Coalition

The CNY Stormwater Coalition was formed in order to establish a regional approach to stormwater management and water resources protection. The Coalition is made up of 27 cities, towns, villages and counties that operate Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s). Through the Coalition, municipalities are working together to meet regulatory requirements while improving water quality in Central New York.

CNY STORMWATER COALITION MEMBERS

Camillus, Town	Onondaga, Town	Liverpool, Village
Cicero, Town	Pompey, Town	Manlius, Village
Clay, Town	Salina, Town	Marcellus, Village
DeWitt, Town	Van Buren, Town	Minoa, Village
Geddes, Town	Camillus, Village	North Syracuse, Village
Hastings, Town	Central Square, Village	Phoenix, Village
LaFayette, Town	East Syracuse, Village	Solvay, Village
Lysander, Town	Fayetteville, Village	Syracuse, City
Manlius, Town		Onondaga County
Marcellus, Town		



Despite the rain, turnout was great for the Onondaga County Department of Water Environment Protection's Clean Water Fair at the Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant in September. Many thanks to everyone who stopped by the CNY Stormwater Coalition's booth to learn more about keeping rain out of the drain or just to say "Hello!" Hope to see you there next year!

The CNY Stormwater Coalition is staffed and coordinated by the Central New York Regional Planning & Development Board. For more information, visit the CNY Stormwater website at www.cnyrpd.org/stormwater or call 315-422-8276.



Calendar of Events

CNY Stormwater Coalition Meeting

1:00 PM on October 28 at the Geddes Town Hall, 1000 Woods Road, Syracuse. A short tour of green infrastructure practices that have been installed at the Town Hall and the adjacent Village of Solvay Youth Building will be conducted immediately following the meeting. Additional information is available at www.cnyrpd.org/stormwater or call 315-422-8276.

Town of DeWitt Fall Roadside Clean-up

will take place on Saturday October 18 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The town will provide bags, stickers and safety vests. Volunteers should bring gloves. Contact Dennis Payne at (315) 469-0565 for more information or to volunteer.

Cornell Cooperative Extension Onondaga County Annual Community Tree Planting

will take place on Saturday, November 8 from 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM. This annual event celebrates the rich history of Syracuse's urban canopy through community involvement. Join other volunteers, community members and city officials to plant 100 trees in the Northside neighborhood. Register on-line [here](#) or call Kim Zhang, (315) 424-9485 ext. 228 for more information.

“**LIKE**” us on our Facebook community page!

We're just getting started and invite your support and input!

We'll be posting lots of stormwater news, events, local photos, seasonal information, and more!

Click [Here](#) to follow CNY Stormwater or go directly to www.facebook.com/cnystormwater