

FALL FOLIAGE FACTS

ONLY RAIN DOWN THE STORM DRAIN

Fall is a beautiful time of year in the Roanoke Valley! Bright colors, glorious views, crisp mountain air. But, once the annual leaf drop begins, the number of drainage and flooding complaints made to the County dramatically increases. WHY? Because folks often mismanage the leaves that end up on their property by improperly raking them or blowing them into the street, drainage swales, drainage ditches, curb and gutter system, or nearby creeks. THE RESULT: clogged drainage structures and drainage-ways, and increased street flooding.

BAGGED LEAF COLLECTION

As a service to its residents and to help prevent the above situation, Roanoke County offers bagged leaf collection during your regularly scheduled bulk/brush collection day. To find your bulk/brush collection day, please visit the "Find Your Collection Day" on the following webpage:

<http://www.roanokecountyva.gov/index.aspx?NID=94>



Important Items to Remember:

- Bags must be to the curb by 7:00 a.m. on the bulk/brush collection day.
- Leaves MUST be contained in either tied bags or sealed boxes.
- Bags cannot weigh more than 30 pounds, as bags that are too heavy tend to rip during collection.
- Do not wrap loose leaves in tarps or plastic sheeting.
- Roanoke County does not provide vacuum services for loose leaves. Please do not leave loose leaves at the curb or in the drainage ditches. Flooding and drainage issues occur when leaves are blocking the drainage ditches.

Excess leaves smother lawns and clog drainage ditches and inlets.



OTHER WAYS TO MANAGE LEAVES

If you prefer a more environmentally-friendly approach to leaf management, you can let the leaves "work for you" by employing either of the following options:

- **Mulch/mow** - using a standard rotary or a mulching mower, chop the leaves in your yard and leave them in place. They won't hurt the lawn but might limit weeds!
- **Collect leaves and compost them** - compost is a great additive for gardens and flower beds, and it is virtually free! To effectively compost leaves and other yard waste, consult the Virginia Cooperative Extension's publication 426-70, entitled "Making Compost from Yard Waste" on the following webpage:
http://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/426/426-703/426-703_pdf.pdf

DID YOU KNOW? Leaves that are deliberately swept, raked, or blown into the street, ditches, swales, drainage inlets, or receiving creeks, streams, or rivers constitute an illicit discharge into the County's drainage system! Please bag, mulch/mow, or compost your leaves.

Report Illicit Discharges on the County's website at <http://www.roanokecountyva.gov/index.aspx?NID=306>. Click on "Report Illicit Stormwater Discharges" and provide a specific location (address of nearest residence) and any other appropriate information.

To learn more about the harmful effects of illicit discharges on the area's receiving waters, see the County's various public education videos, entitled *Illicit Discharge, Detection and Elimination - A Grate Concern*, at the following website: <http://www.roanokecountyva.gov/index.aspx?NID=1598>

For questions contact:

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