

# Homeowners Guide: Yard Waste Management



Did you know that yard waste, such as leaves and grass clippings, can contribute to stormwater pollution? When left on streets, sidewalks, or near storm drains, yard waste can be washed into the storm drain system during rainfall events. Unlike sanitary sewers, the stormwater collected in the storm drain system discharges directly to local streams, rivers, and lakes without treatment. As this organic matter decomposes, it releases nutrients, depletes oxygen levels, and harms aquatic life in our local waterways. By following a few simple guidelines for proper yard waste management, you can help protect our local waterbodies.

## Mulching

- Mulch your grass clippings and leaves in place whenever possible, rather than bagging them for disposal.
- Mulching provides a natural source of nitrogen fertilizer for your lawn.
- Keep mulched yard waste away from storm drains and the street to prevent it from washing away.
- Blow grass clippings on driveways and sidewalks back onto the lawn.



Mulch and leave grass clippings for a healthy lawn.

## Composting

- Compost your yard waste at home or use your local compost facility.
- Compost can be used in gardens and on lawns to help improve soil health.
- Check with your local jurisdiction for additional resources such as yard waste bins and composting supplies and classes.



Compost Magazine

Compost bins are a great way to recycle food and yard waste.

## Let Nature do the Work

- In the fall, create a layer of shredded leaf and grass clippings in a garden, wooded or designated area. Over winter, worms and helpful microorganisms will naturally break down these materials, creating nutrient-rich organic matter.

## Proper Disposal

- Bag or contain yard waste for curbside collection or drop-off at designated locations.
- Never blow or sweep leaves, grass clippings, or other yard waste onto the street, sidewalk, or storm drains.
- If you hire a landscaping service, ensure they follow proper yard waste disposal practices.



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Davenport's yard waste bins are placed at the curb. Bags are set out on free pickup day.