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## CLA Water Quality Group October 2024 Newsletter

*Have questions? Contact: [CLwaterquality@gmail.com](mailto:CLwaterquality@gmail.com)*

### Leave the Leaves

These beautiful fall days have been perfect for yard clean up. If you are out there getting your yard ready for winter, be aware of a few things.

Leaves are good for garden beds and composting but they are not good for the lake. In fact it is illegal in New Hampshire to rake your leaves into the lake without a permit. Leaves disturb the ecosystem of the lake. They add nutrients to the lake that interfere with oxygen levels of the water and aid in the growth of algae and cyanobacteria and cause harm to fish and aquatic life.



#### Consider these options for the leaves:

- **Leave them where they are.** Leaves provide a habitat for butterflies and invertebrates during the winter. Shredded leaves provide natural fertilizer for your lawn.
- **Rake them into your garden beds** for natural winter protection for perennials and shrubs.
- **Compost them** with grass clipping and food scraps to enrich the soil for planting next spring.

If you must rake them, rake them into the woods. On the other hand, if leaves naturally fall into the water from your property, leave them there. Raking the lake bottom disturbs the natural sediment and releases phosphorus into the water that can fuel algae blooms.

#### For more information:

- NH Lakes: Don't Let Leaves Litter Lakes  
<https://nhlakes.org/dont-let-leaves-litter-lakes/>
- NH DES: Leaf and Yard Waste  
<https://www.des.nh.gov/news-and-media/blog/leaf-and-yard-waste>
- LSPA: Lake Friendly Landscaping  
<https://www.lakesunapee.org/landscaping>