

## **LEAF WASTE**

The New Hope Borough Department of Public Works conducts an annual fall leaf collection program on Wednesdays, starting in October and ending in early December. All leaves must be placed in plastic or paper bags. Bags must be tied and placed at the curb for pick up. For additional information, please contact Tom Carroll, the Borough's Director of Public Works, at 215 862 3031.

Property owners should not dispose of leaf waste by raking it into the street. The Borough's street sweeper does not have the capacity to handle large volumes of leaves, and leaves blown onto the street often end up clogging the storm sewers. It is a violation of the Code of Ordinances to deposit anything such as leaves, grass clippings, dirt and debris, even snow in the winter, onto the Borough's streets.

Here are a few leaf management options.

### **Let them lie.**

- Leaves naturally tend to collect around plants creating very useful mulch.
- Disadvantages to letting leaves lie is that they can accumulate and cause slick sidewalks when the leaves get wet. Deep layers of leaves left on your grass can kill patches of grass, or can cause a snow mold to develop, requiring grass seeding in the spring.
- Aesthetics is another issue. Some people consider unattended leaves as untidy.
- Remember to love thy neighbor. Don't blow your leaves into someone else's yard! This will put a huge strain on your relationship with your neighbors!

### **Shred while mowing.**

- If done on a regular basis, mowing small amounts of leaves and leaving them on the lawn will not harm the grass.

### **Collect in bagger while mowing.**

- A mixture of leaves and grass makes a wonderful starter for compost or can be used as mulch.

### **Use as a mulch.**

- Leaves used as mulch help to conserve moisture, moderate soil temperatures, reduce weeds and reduce soil erosion around plants.
- To mulch, apply several thin layers of leaves up to a depth of 3-4 inches or shred the leaves before application. Remember to keep the mulch six inches away from tree trunks and wait until after a hard frost before applying mulch in the fall.

### **Compost.**

- Leaves are excellent materials for compost piles. Microbes necessary for composting are already present on leaves so you don't need to use any commercial compost starters.
- You can use leaf compost as a substitute for peat moss when planting or add to planting areas.
- With a little basic information, leaves can be composted without being ugly, smelly, difficult or expensive!

**Till into the garden.**

- Before adding leaves to the garden, take time to shred them. This will make tilling easier and the leaves will decompose faster, especially leathery leaves such as oak and sycamore.
- To be on the safe side don't use walnut leaves! They contain a chemical called juglone; this substance can retard growth of other plants.

**What not to do with leaves****Do not burn**

- Contact the New Hope Fire Marshal at 267-224-4488 for Fire Code requirements pertaining to open burning. In general, the Fire Code prohibits open burning that is offensive or objectionable because of smoke or odor emissions or when atmospheric conditions or local circumstances make such fires hazardous.
- An EPA report published in November 1997 shows that a single household burn barrel may emit as much toxic chemicals as a well-controlled municipal incinerator.

**Do not sweep onto the street**

- Leaves clog storm sewers creating drainage problems.
- Leaves can create fire hazards from the heat of a car's catalytic converter.
- In addition it is illegal to deposit raked leaves into the street.