

# Fall Cleanup Opportunities for Lake –Friendly Living

As the leaves turn from green to yellow to orange to red, then fall to the ground, it creates a lot of work for homeowners. It is important to dispose of leaves properly.

While you might think that disposal is as easy as raking the leaves into the water! It may be an easy way to make them disappear, but it's a poor disposal option.

As the leaves decompose in waterways they remove oxygen from the water. Decaying plants also release nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus into the water column that promote excessive algae growth. Fish and other aquatic life can't survive in water with low oxygen. Likewise, some algal blooms can pose threats to human and animal health



## **What You Can Do to Help Protect the Upper Saranac Lake Watershed:**

1. Yard waste can contribute significant amounts of phosphorus to waterways. Keep soil, leaves, and lawn clippings out of streams and the lake by bagging them, composting them, or leaving them right on the lawn as a natural fertilizer.
2. Mow higher. Keeping your grass length to 2½ – 3 inches is healthier for your lawn – and means you can mow less often!
3. Pick up pet waste. Pet waste can contain harmful bacteria as well as phosphorus. Flush it in the toilet or place in the garbage.
4. Control soil erosion around your house. When left bare, soil is easily washed away with rain, carrying phosphorus with it. Soil erosion can be prevented by covering exposed soil with vegetation or mulch.
5. Utilize shoreline vegetative buffers with native plants to restore the ecological functions of the lake shore.
6. Stop stormwater runoff with use of Rain Barrels. Rain barrels are any above ground container modified to receive, store, and distribute rooftop runoff for non-drinking uses.
7. Plant only native plants for landscaping objectives.

**Upper Saranac Foundation**  
*It still is, and always will be, about Water Quality*

