

Leaf Disposal This Fall

Leaves, acorns, and other yard waste can significantly contribute to the high nitrogen and phosphorous levels in Forest Lake. When you're cursing the blanket of leaves in your yard this fall, The Forest Lake Improvement Committee (FLIC) asks that you please consider your impact on the lake, particularly if you live on or near the shoreline or an inlet.

FLIC Suggested Methods For Leaf Disposal

Composting

Composting your leaves is a great way to remove your leaves by turning them into high quality fertilizer for your garden. You can learn more at sites like www.goodcompost.com.

Bagging as Yard Waste

Bagging your leaves and disposing them through curb side pick-up completely removes their nutrients from the lake's watershed. Waste Management offers yard waste disposal for an additional \$2/mo from April through November. Also, some leaf blowers have a mulching function which can decrease the overall volume of leaves by more than half.

Mulching

Thoroughly mulching your leaves with a mulching lawnmower decrease their ability to get into the lake, and will also act as a natural fertilizer for your lawn.

Methods to Avoid

Blowing leaves into the street or directly into the lake

Leaves blown into the street **will** end up in the lake. The decomposing leaves create bottom "muck" and excess nutrients to the water. More than enough leaves end up in the lake from the wind - please don't add anymore!

Burning leaves

Burning leaves has the largest negative impact on the lake – please avoid it at all costs. Burning breaks down the leaf structure and makes the nutrients readily available (no decomposition necessary) for excess algae and plant growth. Even worse, burning leaves at the curbside, close to the shoreline or close to an inlet gives the ash a direct path to the lake. Burning leaves along the street is also illegal in Lake County and will result in a fine. If you have absolutely no other options than burning, please **DO NOT BURN AT THE CURBSIDE OR CLOSE TO THE SHORELINE OR AN INLET.** Also, consider disposing the cool ash in the garbage to remove the nutrients from the lake's watershed.

We understand that everyone's yard and abilities are unique, but please do your part to keep Forest Lake beautiful!