

## SALEM CARES

Salem cares about clean water and is doing its part to help prevent pollution in local water bodies. This outreach message helps the Town of Salem meet US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements to share pollution prevention information with its residents.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Drop off your yard waste at the Transfer Station, located on Shannon Road, for composting. Call 890-2164 or visit the [Transfer Station website](#) for more information. Please be sure there is no trash mixed in with the yard waste you bring in for composting!
- Start backyard composting (away from water bodies) with this free ["how-to" brochure](#). Or use a mulching lawnmower to add organic matter and nutrients to your lawn, and avoid having to dispose of the grass clippings.
- NEVER dispose of leaves or clippings in or near storm drains, drainage channels (where rain or melting snow drains), wetlands or water bodies!

Produced by the Town of Salem



with assistance from  
the NH Department of Environmental Services  
[Watershed Assistance Section](#)

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

*Leaves and grass clippings can be a valuable resource OR a source of water pollution.*

### As a valuable resource . . .

**Mulched leaves or grass clippings on your lawn add valuable nutrients and organic matter.** Grass clippings provide a source of slow-release nutrients reducing the amount of lawn fertilizer needed. A thin layer of leaves will break down and add much needed organic matter to plant beds.



**Composting leaves and grass clippings saves money.** Compost is natural recycling. Compost can be used as a top dressing on your lawn or garden beds reducing or eliminating the need for fertilizer and mulch.

### As a source of water pollution . . .

**Decaying yard waste kills aquatic animals in water bodies and wetlands.** Leaves and grass clippings decompose in water and wetlands by using the oxygen that other organisms such as dragonfly larvae and fish need to live.

**Yard waste on banks and in wetlands smothers natural vegetation.** Leaves or grass dumped on the banks of water bodies and wetlands block sunlight smothering the natural plant life that provide food and cover to animals such as turtles and deer.

**Yard waste dumped near water bodies contributes to algae growth and odors.** Seepage from leaves and grass clippings piled on or near the banks of a water body will slowly make its way into the water. When nutrients are plentiful, algae proliferate and form foul-smelling, green mats on the water surface.

**Yard waste dumped in or near wetlands or surface waters is against the law!** In an effort to protect water bodies and wetlands, the NH legislature passed a law that prohibits filling streams and wetlands with waste materials, including yard waste. RSA 482-A:3.

**PLEASE DO YOUR PART TO KEEP OUR WATER BODIES AND WETLANDS CLEAN!**