

October 2011 DRAFT

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## **Loving the Lakes is Easy**

Football, chill in the air, kids back in school, apples, leaf raking... all signs of fall. But leaves in the street this fall result in green lakes next summer. By keeping leaves and other yard waste out of the street, you are proudly displaying your love of Dane County's lakes and streams.

Leaves or grass clippings in the street can get washed directly to the nearest lake or stream via storm drains when it rains. Even if the leaves never move, rain water running over and through them makes a nutrient-rich tea that's carried directly to the storm drains promoting algae growth.

As the leaves turn glorious colors and fall onto lawns, it's time to "Love Your Lakes, Don't Leaf Them." There are some easy alternatives to raking. Simply use your lawn mower to mulch leaves directly on your lawn. These shredded leaves act as a natural fertilizer returning nutrients to your lawn. If you prefer to bag your grass clippings and shredded leaves, empty them on your vegetable and flowerbeds or around your trees and shrubs to help suppress weeds. Compost your leaves and use them next year in your gardens.

If you rake, keep leaves on the terrace, not in the street. Check with your municipality for curbside collection dates and other requirements so that your leaves are at the curb for as short a time as possible.

For more information on "Love Your Lakes, Don't Leaf Them," or to obtain yard signs and brochures, visit [www.myfairlakes.com](http://www.myfairlakes.com) or call 224-3746.

No matter how far you live from the water's edge, storm drains lead to the nearest lake or stream. So, when you see someone keeping leaves out of the street, you know they're showing their love for the lakes by keeping algae-feeding nutrients out of our surface waters.

**Love Your Lakes,**

**Don't Leaf Them**



[myfairlakes.com](http://myfairlakes.com)

**Keep leaves out of the street.**

*Get your free yard sign today!*

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