Wetlands & Yard Waste:
How responsible yard care benefits your community

What's the problem?

Yard waste such as leaves, grass clippings, and other brush seems natural, but cause issues when dumped into ponds and wetlands. These include:

- **Clogged waterways** including ditches and culverts. When debris fills waterways and slowly travels downstream, it increases the risk of flooding. Not only is dumping into wetlands and waterways (including slopes that lead to water) irresponsible to neighbors, it is illegal under state law.

- **Pollution** in the form of excessive nutrients. Phosphorus in leaves and grass clippings produces excessive algae, which harms water quality and aquatic life.

- **Sedimentation** covers wetlands in a thick layer of mud. Sand and dried grass clippings choke out native vegetation and wildlife, creating long-term changes to the soil. Dense stands of cattails, reed canary grass, and other invasive species often take advantage of these changes and reduce the wetland's ability to take in and store water.

Wetlands and ditches in the VLAWMO watershed drain to East Vadnais Lake, the reservoir for the Saint Paul Regional Water Services. Responsible actions upstream help protect this drinking water resource.

What is responsible disposal?

- **Mulch** leaves into the yard or keep grass clippings on the lawn for natural fertilizer.

- **Bag** leaves and/or grass clippings and either a) bring them to a Ramsey County yard waste facility or b) contract a yard waste hauler for curbside pick-up.

- **Compost** yard waste at home. Keep compost piles in designated bins at least 40' away from ponds, shorelines, and wetlands. To help absorb nutrients, surround compost with native vegetation.

Distance requirements can vary depending on wetland size. Contact your City/Township or VLAWMO for details on specific wetlands or fill requirements.   *VLAWMO: (651) 204-6070*

Thank you for your support!
Your leadership promotes clean water, neighborhood beautification, and groundwater recharge.

VLAWMO
Vadnais Lake Area
Water Management Organization
EST 1983
www.vlawmo.org/wca-rules