

# The Pembroke Stormwater Times

SUMMER 2024



## PROPER DISPOSAL OF GRASS CLIPPINGS

As summer rolls on, homeowners and renters with lawns find themselves mowing throughout the season. When the clippings from cutting grass are picked up by storm water runoff they are carried directly into our local rivers, lakes, and various waterbodies. Grass clippings contribute nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, which the EPA states as one of the most troublesome pollutants in storm water runoff, and is considered the primary cause of water quality problems in our waterbodies. Grass clippings that are not disposed of properly cause unwanted growth of algae and aquatic weeds in waterways, leading to algae blooms or “scums” on lakes on ponds. Too much algae can harm a lake system, blocking sunlight from getting to aquatic plants, and taking oxygen that fish need to live. Read more to find out how you can properly dispose of your grass clippings.

### *Did you know?*



*13,000 pounds of yard waste are produced per acre annually.*



*Yard waste accounts for 20% of all waste material in the United States.*

## DISPOSE IT PROPERLY!

**Improper disposal can do serious damage!**

### ***Human Health***

- Degrades quality of water bodies and aquifers which supply your water.

### ***Aquatic Life***

- Nutrients from grass clippings increase algal blooms, killing fish and aquatic plants.

### ***Wildlife***

- Decaying grass kills wildlife in all waterbodies.

### ***Vegetation***

- Grass clippings can smother natural vegetation on stream banks.

**[www.ThinkBlueSuncook.org](http://www.ThinkBlueSuncook.org)**

# Why Does it Matter

Grass Clippings can be a good resource, or a source of water pollution. How they are handled determines the outcome.

As a **Good Resource**:

- Grass clippings on your lawn add valuable nutrients and organic matter. This can decrease the need for fertilizer and water and limit evaporation.
- Composting leaves save money. Use compost as a top dressing on your lawn or garden to reduce or eliminate the need for mulch.

As a Source of **Water Pollution**:

- Grass clippings on stream banks can smother natural vegetation.
- Grass clippings dumped near streams is against the law.
- Grass clippings dumped near water drainage can clog and cause expensive repairs.

## Tips for Proper Disposal of Grass Clippings

- Start backyard composting.
- NEVER dispose of leaves in or near storm drains, drainage channels, wetlands, or waterbodies.
- Keep all lawn clippings on top of your lawn, or properly disposed. Do not leave lawn clippings in the street or driveway, or any other surface that may lead to stormwater drainage.
- Steps should be taken to reduce any type of pollution into stormwater runoff.
- Bag grass clippings for disposal in landfill, or use other proper disposal methods like composting.

This flyer is intended for educational purposes as part of Pembroke's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) requirements. Check out more at [www.thinkbluesuncook.org](http://www.thinkbluesuncook.org).



**Town of Pembroke**

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