

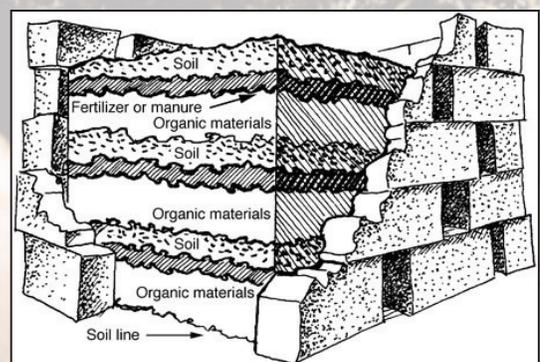
# Reduce, Reuse, Compost!

## Benefits of Composting

With fall quickly approaching, it is important to understand the effects that fallen leaves and other debris have on our drinking water. Although picturesque, they can have detrimental effects on our environment. The temptation is to just sweep leaves onto the street. The problem, however, is that leaves dumped into the street will eventually fall into our storm sewers. The leaf debris, carrying fertilizers and pesticides, combined with other yard waste, eventually gets carried into lakes and rivers and goes untreated. Once in the water, this debris releases phosphorous, which promotes the growth of algae blooms that degrade water quality, harming lake and river ecosystems and aquatic life. Leaf debris can also clog culverts, storm drains and pipes, increasing the risk of flooding during heavy rains. There are many responsible alternatives to taking care of the leaves on our property. Alternatives - like composting - provide a natural way of protecting our water sources from pollutants.

## How to Compost

1. Start on bare earth
2. Cover the bare earth with a few inches of straw or twigs to aid in the drainage and aeration of the pile
3. Add alternate layers of dry and wet compost materials (*Dry: straw, leaves, sawdust pellets and wood ashes; Wet: food scraps, tea bags, and seaweed*)
4. Add manure, green manure (*clover, buckwheat, wheat-grass, grass clippings*) or any nitrogen source.
5. Water pile to moisten compost materials
6. Cover pile to retain heat and moisture
7. Turn pile every few weeks to aerate



**Composting makes your water taste better.**



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