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## CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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### **LEAF COLLECTION EFFORT PASSES HALFWAY MARK IN CITY**

*Residents can help collection effort by placing leaves in Muscatine Yard Waste Bags*

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** - The City of Muscatine is halfway through the second round of fall leaf collection and, despite the large amount of leaves being left curbside this year, crews from the Department of Public Works remain on schedule.

Crews are wrapping up second pass operations in Zone 4 ([see map](#)) and are scheduled to begin their second pass in Zone 5 on Wednesday (Nov. 25) with Zone 6 scheduled to begin on Wednesday, Dec. 2. The Department of Public Works may make one more pass through each of the eight zones as long as weather permits.

While raking the leaves to the curb is a lot of work for collection by City of Muscatine staff, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources offers three other ways that residents can use or dispose of their fall leaf collections.

“While we offer a city-wide leaf collection effort in October and November, residents do not have to wait for their zone collection days to dispose of their leaves,” Brian Stineman, Muscatine Public Works director said. “Residents can use Muscatine Yard Waste Bags to bag their leaves and place them near their refuse bin on their refuse collection day.”

Muscatine Yard Waste Bags are available at the Muscatine Transfer Station, both Hy-Vee locations in Muscatine, and at Fareway. Grass clippings, leaves, and garden waste will be picked up at the curb on the residents' regular refuse collection day as long as they are placed in a Muscatine Yard Waste Bag.

“It takes a lot of manpower to operate the trucks and leaf vacs, manpower that could be used for other services,” Stineman said. “Putting yard waste in these bags and placing them curbside speeds up the process for the resident and for the City, and allows our crews to work on other needed projects.”

Composting and mulching are two additional measures to turn yard waste into valuable nutrients for resident gardens.

The Iowa DNR release follows:

**DES MOINES** - Fall leaves are beautiful – until they pile up in your yard. But don't send those precious nutrients up in smoke. Instead, put them to good use. Your leaves, branches and other landscape materials can nourish your lawn, garden or community. It's as easy as 1 – 2 – 3:

#### 1. **Compost.**

Composting leaves and food scraps is a great way to turn this waste into nutrients for your garden. It's also a great way to get kids outside, learning practical hands-on science. They can start by researching the many types and sizes of compost containers. (For tips on low-tech ways to compost, see a [DNR tutorial](#).) Managing the compost pile provides exercise and a learning opportunity. A good compost mix needs both carbon (dead or dry leaves) and nitrogen (green materials like food scraps and grass clippings). Carry the project forward to spring, and use finished compost to enrich the soil and gardens.

## 2. **Mulching.**

Your lawn will love you if you chop up and leave your leaves in place. Leaves are a free and natural fertilizer and they add organic matter to enrich your soil. Use your regular lawn mower. Or use a mulching lawn mower to shred and mix leaves and grass into your yard.

## 3. **Bag it.**

If you have too many leaves or branches to compost, check with your community to see if they collect yard waste or have a drop-off site. Sometimes there's a fee, but the upside is that anyone can pick up composted materials for their yards or gardens.

Burning leaves seems to capture the smell of autumn. But breathing [leaf smoke](#) pulls pollutants such as carbon monoxide, soot and toxic chemicals into your lungs. While it may smell good, smoke is especially harmful to children, the elderly and those with respiratory problems such as asthma. Turning leaves into nutrients is the healthy way to protect your and your neighbor's lungs.