

Autumn in the Air

As the sun sets a little earlier each day, cold winds start to blow and leaves fall from trees. To prevent various infestations of critters preparing to hunker down for the winter, brush is cut and leaves are raked. Some of us bag the foliage. Some deposit it into the streets and wait for city workers -- or the wind -- to sweep it away. Still others seize the opportunity to use dried leaves as kindling for fall bonfires.

While there is some charm to the glow of an Autumn bonfire, there are also several risks involved with burning leaves.

- Burning leaves and yard debris too close to a house or outbuildings can cause fire and smoke damage.
- Wind can carry burning leaves to other areas of the property, igniting plants or building structures.
- Smoke from burning leaves causes eye and lung irritation to those around you. In excess, burning yard debris significantly contributes to smog and air pollution.

For various reasons, not all your neighbors might appreciate the aroma of incinerated tree debris and the smoke that accompanies it. Be kind and consider environmentally --



Options for leaf disposal: Burning...



Composting...

and neighborly -- solutions for leaf disposal. Some viable options include:

- Mulching with a lawn mower to create nutrients for soil and grass;
- Composting to use as fertilizer for next Spring;
- Disposal services to pick up yard waste, or provide drop off locations for residents. Refrain from using plastic lawn bags, instead, use biodegradable paper leaf bags preferred by most local municipalities.

If your heart is still set on the warm glow of blazing leafage, here are a few safety tips:

- Clear dry leaves and yard debris away from the home and other buildings. Remove flammable tree debris from roofs and gutters.
- Have simple fire fighting tools on hand: rake, water bucket or garden hose, shovel and sand, dirt or kitty litter. Fireproof oven mitts can protect your hands in the event of an unexpected flare up. A galvanized garbage can cover can help control and



...and Bagging.

extinguish small fires.

- Install smoke alarms in your home. Test them and install fresh batteries.
- Make sure fire is out and ashes are cool before disposing of them.

However you choose to enjoy the coming cool weather, make it a safe and risk free experience for everyone. 🍂

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