

Dear Recycle Lady



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I hear it's better for the environment to leave my leaves in my yard instead of raking and bagging. Do you agree with this? Lawn Mower

Dear Lawn Mower,

Yes, I agree with this. Leaves left in your yard will be fertilizer for your grass, and perhaps give small animals some shelter, according to David Mizejewski, a naturalist at Natural Wildlife Federation. "The leaves fall around the root zone of plants that otherwise compete with the trees and shrubs." Mow your yard instead of raking your leaves. By doing so, leaves are broken up into smaller pieces and add nutrients to the grass. And, since the leaves are smaller, they will compost quicker, and the recycling process of returning the nutrients to the soil occurs more rapidly. Bagging your leaves is not a good idea either. According to the EPA, landfills in 2018 received nearly 11 million tons of yard clippings, which break down and form methane, a greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. Blowing your leaves into the street is also not recommended. Leaves can stop up drains and affect local waters. If there is foreign debris in your leaves, it can clog grates and prevent water from moving along the street. Leaves raked into plants beds along the edge of your yard will provide wildlife habitat. Everything from earthworms, bugs, toads, box turtles and chipmunks can live in this layer of leaves during the winter.

!!! Congratulations to our Greenbrier County Solid Waste Authority (GCSWA) !!!

who received the West Virginia Make It Shine Clean County Award at the 2022 WV Educational Conference on Litter Control & Solid Waste Management. This award recognizes all county, city, community and individual efforts to make Greenbrier County the cleanest county in the state. Participation of individuals in programs such as Adopt-A-Highway, Roadsides in Bloom, river and/or stream cleanups, environmental education, Earth Day Celebrations, recycling programs, the beautification of communities, picking up litter, improvement of public lands or any environmental improvement contributed to their success. Also included were contributions by local organizations Lewisburg in Bloom, The Bluebell Garden Club, The Greenbrier Garden Club, The Lewisburg House and Garden Club, and The WVU Master Gardeners of the Greenbrier Valley. The 55-page application for this award was a compilation of the numbers available in each of 10 areas. Kudos to all Greenbrier countians who helped make Greenbrier County shine!

Greenbrier County was well represented at the conference held at Glades Springs Resort. Board members attending were Mike Eltzroth and Lucie Refsland, as well as Todd Riggs, Director of Recycling and Myles Yates, General Manager of Greenworks Recycling. Lucie Refsland, a.k.a. The Recycle Lady, received the Recycler of the Year and Volunteer of the Year awards.

Interesting Information: The ocean provides more than just seafood. Many common foods, such as peanut butter and soy milk contain ingredients from the sea. For example, peanut butter is made more spreadable with the help of carrageenan, an algae extract!

Have questions about recycling, or interesting information about recycling? Send questions or requests to recyclelady@greenbrier-swa.com. Dear Recycle Lady is sponsored jointly by the Greenbrier Recycling Center and Greenworks Recycling.