

## Why Should I Keep Mashpee Stormwater Drainage Structures Free of Leaves?

Blocked catch basins may cause localized flooding. Mashpee's catch basins are designed to remove water from roadways as quickly as possible during a storm. Leaf litter can block catch basins, causing flooding along streets and yards becoming a safety problem for motorists and a nuisance to homeowners. Help avoid road flooding by clearing grates adjacent to your property of leaf debris. Never rake or blow leaves directly onto roadways as they will end up in catch basins.



Catch basins also filter out sediments from stormwater drainage. When properly functioning, catch basins help to improve water quality. It is important that Mashpee residents dispose of leaf litter properly to avoid clogging grates and to reduce the runoff of nutrients to Mashpee's lakes, pond and coastal waters. Remember, only rain in the storm drain.

## How Can I Help?

### Dispose of Leaf Litter by Composting:

Composting autumn leaves take advantage of a great source of local organic matter. Leaves are packed with trace minerals drawn up from deep in the soil. When added to your garden, leaves feed earthworms and beneficial microbes. They lighten heavy soils and help sandy soils retain moisture. They make an attractive mulch in the flower garden. They're a fabulous source of carbon to balance the nitrogen in your compost pile. And they insulate tender plants from cold.

Consider composting to amend your vegetable and flower gardens naturally by doing the following:

**Rake and Shred Leaves** – First, shred up leaves by driving over them with a lawn. In time, shredded leaves become leaf mold which makes a fabulous mulch high in calcium and magnesium. After a month or so, shredded leaves can be used for mulching garlic, tender perennials and roses over the winter. The rest can be used as a mulch mixed with organic fertilizer and some compost to amend soil in the springtime.



### Alternatives to On-Site Composting:

If you can't compost your leaves at home, they should be taken to the Mashpee Transfer Station that has composting facilities on-site. Leaves should never be blown or raked into waterways or catch basins.