



Autumn Leaves: Love 'Em and Leave 'Em



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The Problem



- Unsafe Driving Conditions
- Runoff Pollution of Waterways
- Waste of Valuable Organic Resource
- High Cost of Collection & Removal



Collection and disposal of leaves - annual costs:

- Irvington - \$130,000
- Tarrytown - \$175,000
- Greenburgh - \$300k - \$400k
- Westchester County – \$4M+





LELE - The Solution!

- Removing leaves from waste stream reduces municipal costs:
 - Tipping Fees
 - Collection Costs
 - Hauling / Disposal Costs
 - Collateral Damage
 - Reduces Capital Investment
- Mulching-in-place saves landscaping professionals time & money.
- It's good for the environment - feeds trees & lawn, builds soil food web.
- It's simple to learn and implement.



LELE is Born

Your Leaves: Love ‘Em And Leave ‘Em
“It’s Green and It Makes Cents.”

GPTF formed in 2009 by Village in order to review Climate Protection Task Force Report and come up with some immediate cost savings.

Initiative started Summer of 2010 as a solid waste reduction education & outreach project, launching at Aquefest with composting and mulching demos.

Municipal and County support quickly followed.



LELE Initiative

Target audiences for outreach & training:

- Homeowners
- Landscapers
- Municipal Officials
- School Districts
- Commercial Properties
- Churches, Non-profits

Subject matter experts - Landscapers, Master Gardeners & Composters, DPW & Parks Dept., Cornell Extension.



How? Leave Leaves At the Source!

- Shred them with a mulching lawn mower and leave them in place.
- Shred them and use as mulch on borders, flower beds and tree rings.
- Leave them alone in wooded areas.
- Compost them in a pile or compost bin (with or without pre-shredding).





Tools of the Trade

- Mower w/ mulching rig:
 - “Gator” Blades
 - Mulch Gate
- Leaf mulcher/chipper
- Leaf vacuum/shredder
- Leaf blower/rake
- Mother Nature





Our Partners



- Village / Town Boards
- DPW and Parks Departments
- Westchester County Department of Environmental Facilities
- County Board of Legislators
- Multiple municipalities in region
- Non-profits: GNC, SWEAC, Grassroots EE, Bedford LLA
- CACs, ECBs
- Garden Clubs
- Trained Landscapers



Sources of Funding?

- **Contributions** - Earth Day 40
- **Grants** - Clean Air, Cool Planet
- **Co-operation with other organizations** - GNC, SWEAC
- **In-kind services** - landscaper trainers, graphic design, volunteers
- **Village support** - limited office services, web pages, DPW mailer, water bills, eblasts



Municipal Issues

- **Expense Monitoring** - Municipal cost savings?
- **Metrics** - Yearly leaf processing (pick up, transport, tipping) costs separated out from overall yard waste stream.
- **Expectations** - Set reasonable targets for multi-year ramp up.
- **Carrot or Stick?** - Ensuring adoption of practice.
- **Continued Education & Outreach** - Public “buy-in.”





Outreach

- **Village Website & Toolkit** - open source
- **Testimonials** - newspaper ads
- **Media** - local talk radio
- **“How to” Videos** on YouTube
- **Showcase Properties** - style leaders
- **On-site Trainings** - for professionals & homeowners
- **Yard Signs** - increasing public awareness
- **Trial Areas** - see for yourself!





Testimonials



"We've been mulching-in-place for the last three or four years. Our playing fields at Memorial Park show improved turf that holds up to hard play, withstands drought better and drains faster after a storm. For the first time, we're able to grow nice grass in the picnic area under the Oak trees at Matthiessen Park."

- Chris DePaul, Foreman Irrigation Parks Dept.



Our Leaves: Love 'Em And Leave 'Em

For more information and "how to" -> www.washington.gov/green

Help to: www.washington.gov/green -> See Parks with a Clean Act: www.washington.gov/green



LELE Toolkit – Resource Files for Your Own Local Initiative

- **Letters** that you can edit for your municipality (.doc):
 - DPW Mail-out Initiative Announcement
 - Sample EBLAST to Residents
 - Sample LELE letter - homeowner to landscaper
 - Sample LELE letter - village to landscaper
- **Discussion Topics** (.doc):
 - LELE Talking Points
- **LELE Initiative Power Point:**
 - LELE PP Presentation (.ppt) & Printout version (.pdf)
- **Bookmark** source files (Illustrator .ai):
 - LELE homeowner bookmark - front & rear (Illustrator)
 - LELE landscaper bookmark - front & rear (Illustrator)
- **Bookmark** printer files (.pdf): UPDATED
 - LELE homeowner bookmark - front & rear (.pdf - w/outlined fonts)
 - LELE landscaper bookmark - front & rear (.pdf - w/outlined fonts)
- **Logo** files (jpgs): 5 different files with variations of logo
- **Yard Sign** source files (Illustrator .ai): 2 sizes (12" x 18", 18" x 24"), 2 versions
- **Yard Sign** printer files (.pdf): 2 sizes (12" x 18", 18" x 24"), 2 versions
- **"HOW TO" Pocket Guide** (2 sided bi-lingual)
- **YOU-TUBE How Tos:**
 - <http://www.youtube.com/user/IrvingtonGPTF> - **short demo videos**



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Toolkit Samples

Fall Leaves: Save Time & Money by Mulching-in-Place

Ahorre Tiempo y Dinero en su Propio Lugar

How! It's as simple as shredding leaves into small pieces using a mulching mower, a shredder/chipper, or a vacuum shredder. Shredded leaf volume reduces up to 10x.

- Shred leaves directly into lawn. Leaves 6" if mulched but may require several passes, as in driveway or patio, rake or blow into pile, apply on landscape beds. 2"-3" thick (like any leaves in wooded area?) Leave them alone to naturally. Trees have evolved to recycle their fertilizer and maintaining the vigor of their
- For landscape beds including ground covers, carefully blow off the leaves, then shred & re-
- Excess leaves can be used in a compost pile. "brown" layer in the compost recipe. (Always leaves in the pile for speeded-up decomposition, add grass clippings, as well.

Benefits of leaf mulching in place for lawn & garden:

- Increases water holding capacity of soil, improves absorption of rainwater runoff.
- Lightens clay soils and gives organic fluff to sandy soils.
- Cools roots in summer and provides additional temperature protection in winter.
- Increases nutrients and oxygen in the soil.
- Increases biological activity of earthworms, microbes & other beneficial soil organisms.
- It is a free "fertilizer" for landscape plants, trees, vegetable garden and lawn.
- Eliminates or reduces yard waste from entering municipal "waste streams." Saves taxpayer money.

For more information and resources: visit the GPTT page on Village of Irvington website - www.irvingtonny.gov/green

*New for 2014: contact Irvington Green Policy Task Force. Contact us: green@irvingtonny.gov

Save Time and Money!

"It's green and it makes cents!"

For more information and short "how to" video demos about mulching leaves, visit the Irvington Green Policy Task Force:

www.irvingtonny.gov/green

or email us at green@irvingtonny.gov

LEAVES: LOVE 'EM AND LEAVE 'EM

AND LEAVE 'EM

Be Green & Sustainable - Did you know these benefits?

Reduce expenses and time: Work faster; it's mulch (mow) once and you're done! No piles to collect, move, or dump! Reduces use of leaf blowers, too.

Keep your property healthy: Leaf mulch recycles nutrients into the soil, helps retain moisture in the summer, and reduces the need for additional fertilizer.

Help the planet: Transporting and disposing of leaves wastes fuel and contributes to pollution. Leaves on street clog storm drains and pollute the river.

Be a neighborhood leader: The LELE mulching initiative is spreading across the county as the best fall leaf handling practice. It's eco-friendly and organic.



LELE Homepage



**LEAVES:
WE LOVE 'EM
AND LEAVE 'EM**
**Leaf Recycling
In Progress**

**Watch This Yard - No Leaves
Leave the Property** 

See: <http://www.irvingtonny.gov/green>

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