



Leaves are collected curbside on garbage pick-up day, and must be in paper, biodegradable bags.

Composting Offers both Environmental and Economic Benefits for Summit Residents

Now through December 6, the City of Summit is offering curbside collection of bagged leaves. Residents may also bring leaves to the Transfer Station location on 40 New Providence Avenue. The collected leaves are then composted and the compost is made available to the public.

What is Composting?

Compost is a dark brown, crumbly 'cake like' by-product that is the end result of natural processes breaking down organic matter. Simply put, compost is taking yard waste (grass clippings, leaves, dead plants, pumpkins from Halloween, etc.) and diverting it from the municipal waste stream. In Summit, leaves and other vegetative elements comprise 19% of the City's total waste.



Bagged leaves are collected and composted at the Transfer Station, a 10-month process.



Leaves are shredded to incorporate moisture and oxygen to accelerate decomposition.

How does Composting work?

The composting of vegetative waste is an aerobic process, requiring the proper balance of oxygen and moisture. Due to their high carbon content, leaves may take five months to two years to compost by themselves. Leaves will compost and turn out a good finished product if moisture is adequate and the pile is turned frequently, ensuring a good supply of oxygen.

Proper temperature is another important factor in the aerobic composting process, and a determinant in the rate of decomposition. The compost pile must have a structure that allows for the movement of air.



The Department of Public Works monitors the temperatures of the windrows, checking weekly.

At the Summit Transfer Station, leaves are placed in 'windrows' (a-shaped piles) for effective decomposition.

Windrow size is important to properly maintain the favorable temperatures for decomposition with the standard size being 6 to 8 feet high and 12 to 14 feet wide.



A front end loader is used to turn the windrows and to move the finished composted material.

The process from leaf collection to a composted product will take about 10 months and generate a nutrient-rich, dark soil that is available to residents at no cost for re-use in gardens and on lawns. The City also uses the compost material for various public projects in Summit.

Composting is an important way for the City of Summit to recycle vegetative waste and to save valuable financial and environmental resources.

For more information on composting in Summit, please contact Paul Cascais, Superintendent of Public Works, at pcascais@cityofsummit.org.