

Fort Wayne City Utilities Grasscycling Fact Sheet



What is **Grasscycling** ?

- Grasscycling is the natural recycling of grass by leaving clippings on the lawn when mowing.
- Grass clippings decompose quickly, returning valuable nutrients back into the soil.



Benefits

- Reduces time spent mowing and maintaining your lawn
- Prevents common turf diseases
- Reduces the need to fertilize
- Does not cause thatch—in fact, helps prevent it
- Makes turf greener and tougher
- Cuts down on watering needs and costs
- Eliminates disposal of grass clippings (and sometimes leaves too)

Mowing

- Mow your lawn when the grass is dry.
- Keep mower blades sharp.
- **The 1/3 Rule**
Mow often enough so that no more than 1/3 the length of the grass blade is cut in any one mowing.

Clean-Up

- When grass clippings are washed into a storm drain, they can clog the drain. They also carry lawn chemicals into waterways.
- After mowing, sweep or blow grass clippings from the street or sidewalk back onto the lawn to help reduce water pollution.



Save Money and Help the Environment

In the summer, the amount of waste going to the landfill increases when homeowners put grass clippings in their garbage cart. Sending clippings to the landfill is expensive and could mean everyone will pay more for garbage collection.

Fort Wayne landfills 7,744 tons of grass clippings each year
That's enough to fill 81,000 garbage carts
or 516,000 bags!

Every summer the City spends \$200,000
for the clippings that go to the landfill.

Learn More

For more information about landscaping practices that can save you time and money while protecting the environment please visit www.cityoffortwayne.org and see other fact sheets such as this one produced by the City of Fort Wayne and City Utilities or Call 311



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Watering

- If you water, do so early in the morning to reduce evaporation and prevent disease.
- Deep, infrequent watering produces a stronger, more extensive root system.
- Lawns watered too frequently can develop shallow root systems that make the grass more susceptible to stress and disease.
- During prolonged dry weather grass may look dead. In fact it is probably just dormant and will turn green again when temperatures drop and it rains.

Fertilizing

- Chemical fertilizer and other lawn care products are carried by rain water runoff into nearby ponds, streams and rivers possibly causing algae blooms and fish kills.
- Before applying fertilizer, test your soil to find out if additional nutrients are needed. Test kits are available at local hardware stores, home supply stores and on line.
- If you do decide to use chemical fertilizer, use a product containing LOW or NO phosphorus.
- Apply fertilizer according to package directions for moderate, even growth.

Over fertilizing can weaken your lawn by causing excessive top growth, making the lawn more prone to disease.

Resources

www.epa.gov/composting/grassmulch.htm
eartheasy.com/grow_lawn_care.htm
faq.leley.org/2012/08/what-is-grass-cycling.html
www.calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/grasscycling/
ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/1000/1190.html
www.american-lawns.com/lawns/grass-cycling.html
www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/ID-182.pdf

