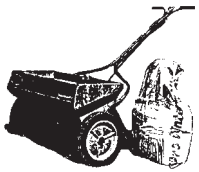
## Grasscycling + Proper Fertilizing & Proper Watering = Healthy Lawn



Grasscycling with proper fertilizing and watering are the ingredients for a healthy lawn. Remember that grasscycling provides half of the nitrogen needed by a lawn, so you will not need as much fertilizer. Overfertilizing weakens your lawn and causes excess growth. Sunny lawns only require three applications of fertilizer per year in May, September and November. For shaded lawns, two applications of fertilizer will be enough. Remember, fertilizing in the fall and/or winter is best for your lawn.

When watering your lawn, water effectively--not often. Over watering will cause your lawn to grow faster, so control your watering times. Water during the early morning or evening when less evaporation occurs. Always wet soil to a depth of four to six inches down. This is perfect for building healthy roots and green growth.

*For further assistance on lawn care, call the Cooperative Extension Service of Ocean County at 732-349-1245 or the Ocean County Department of Solid Waste Management at 732-506-5047.*

*Suggested books on grasscycling:*

The Chemical Free Lawn: The Newest Varieties & Techniques to Grow Lush, Hardy Grass, by Warren Schultz, Biological Urban Gardening Services

Mulching & Backyard Composting Guide, by the McNelly Group and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America

For information on other solid waste management activities in Ocean County, contact:

Ocean County Solid Waste Management Hotline
*1-800-55-RECYCLE*

Ocean County
Department of Solid Waste Management Website:
*www.co.ocean.nj.us/recycle*

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# Grasscycling!

- **Saves time**
- **Saves money**
- **Improves lawn quality**

Cut It and Leave It...Recycle your grass clippings naturally! Here's how. . .

What is grasscycling? Grasscycling is the natural recycling of grass clippings by leaving clippings on the lawn after mowing. There is no need to bag them, just *cut it and leave it!* Grass clippings make up a significant part of our waste stream, and there are only limited areas to dispose of them because of the odor problems they cause. You can help be a part of the solution to the problem, while at the same time, save time and money -- plus have a healthier lawn!

## Grasscycling Begins with Proper Mowing

To be successful with grasscycling, proper mowing is essential. Avoid mowing more than one-third of the lawn height. Most New Jersey lawns thrive when mowed to about 2 to 3 inches, especially in the summer. Taller grass shades the soil, cools the roots and prevents weeds, which gives you a healthier lawn.

**Tip:** ***Remember to sharpen your mower blade about once a month. Dull blades shred and tear grass, which turns tips brown. Do not cut grass when wet. Wet grass clogs mowers.***

## Lawnmowers & Grasscycling

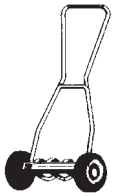
To grasscycle, a special mower is not needed. Regular lawn mowers can be used to grasscycle effectively by removing the collection bag and adding a blade adapter, which will cut up and pulverize grass even more finely. ***Be careful! Some rear-bagging mowers are not safe to operate without bags. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.***

### Did you know. . .?

***That golf courses grasscycle because of the time savings and health benefits it provides for a well-manicured turf.***

Also, check with your local lawn mower dealer about mulching mowers. Models are available that finely cut up grass clippings and return them to the lawn. Mulching mowers get grass clippings back into the soil, which acts as a good source of fertilizer for your lawn. Grasscycling provides up to one-half of the nitrogen needed by a lawn. When you rake them up, you will rob your lawn of food, which will have to be replaced. Grasscycling enables you to provide your lawn with a low maintenance fertilizer schedule.

## Push Mowers Vs. Gas Mowers



Do not forget to consider pushmowers. They are making a comeback in the form of what is called a reel mower. The reel mowers are light-weight, easier to use push mowers. They are environmentally friendly since they have no engines that cause air or noise pollution. Since push mowers have no engine, they have low maintenance. They require no gasoline, oil or spark plugs. The only maintenance that is required is to sharpen the blades every other season. The blades on gas-powered mowers require sharpening more frequently. Blades must be sharp when you grasscycle, whether you use a push or gas mower.

### What About Thatch?

***Grasscycling does not contribute to thatch problems. Thatch is caused by accumulated dead roots. Remember, the more you fertilize and water your lawn --- the faster it grows, and the faster thatch accumulates.***