

Save Time

You'll save 20-25% of the time required to mow your lawn by not stopping to empty the mower bag and hauling the cans to the curb.

Save Money

You'll need to fertilize less (25%-50%), since the lawn clippings return nutrients, including nitrogen, to the soil. Grass cuttings will also help prevent water evaporation and reduce the need for watering.

Save the Environment

Fertilizer run off into the environment is a pollutant. Storm drains carry water directly into lakes, streams, creeks and other waterways. Fertilizer run off can contribute to algae growth, which consumes oxygen and suffocates the plants and animals in the waterway.

Save Your Lawn

Leaving the grass clippings on the lawn contributes to a healthier plant. A healthier lawn is more resilient in times of drought and to insects.

Resources

Rutgers Cooperative
njaes.rutgers.edu/county/quickinfo.php?Bergen

Rutgers Master Gardeners
201-336-6783
bergen.njaes.rutgers.edu/garden

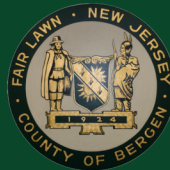
Rutgers Agriculture and Natural Resources
201-336-6780
bergen.njaes.rutgers.edu/ag

The New Jersey Clean Communities Program provides grant funds to municipalities to change the attitudes that cause littering and irresponsible handling of solid waste through public information and education.

The Fair Lawn Recycling Division administers the award winning Fair Lawn Clean Communities Program by holding several annual litter clean up days, sponsoring educational assembly programs at schools, litter enforcement through our Litter Marshal program and anti-litter education through social media, a booth at the Borough Street Fairs and other events.

The Fair Lawn Clean Communities Coordinator is available to speak to civic groups and schools free of charge. To schedule a presentation, call the Fair Lawn Recycling Division at 201-794-5341.

Volunteers are also needed to assist in cleaning up litter in Fair Lawn. Visit the Borough website (fairlawn.org) or call the Recycling office for dates and other information.



Fair Lawn Recycling Division
20-05 Saddle River Road
Fair Lawn, New Jersey 07410
201-794-5341
recycling@fairlawn.org

Source: New Jersey Department of
Environmental Protection

GRASS

Cut-It-and-Leave-It



Environmentally Friendly Lawn Care

Grass clippings are a major part of New Jersey's solid waste stream. While recycling grass and yard waste is a good solution to managing this stream, there is a better solution for grass clippings. By leaving the clippings on the lawn, let nature do the recycling and your lawn will be healthier and you will have less work.



Water Right

Managing how much you water your grass will help the grass to stay healthy, reduce the strain on the water system, especially in time of drought, and reduce your water bills. Follow these guidelines for proper watering:

How Often?

Even in dry periods, lawns only need to be watered once a week if done properly.

How Much?

Clay soils require about an inch per watering and sandy soils will need about 1/2 inch per watering. This will allow water to soak about 4-6 inches into the soil, just right for building a healthy root system that is drought resistant.

When?

Early morning watering will prevent evaporation and will conserve water. Remember to turn off automatic sprinklers during rainy periods.

Mow Right

For an attractive, neatly trimmed lawn, mow high and often so that you are only taking off no more than 1/3 the height of the grass blade. Clippings will disappear into the lawn when they filter into the soil. Most New Jersey lawns should be mowed to 2.5 to 3.5 inches (similar to the rough beside a golf course fairway), especially in the summer to help cool the soil and root system and deter weed growth.

Most new mowers are mulching mowers or the blade can be replaced with one specifically designed for mulching. Check with the manufacturer, your local landscape supply company or hardware store for details.

Fertilize Right

Too much fertilizer results in more rapid growth of the grass, requiring more mowing and can be detrimental to the environment.

Application of fertilizer should be done in September, not in May. Spring applications can harm lawns by promoting more leaf growth and not root growth. A deep, strong root system is vital for a good lawn that is able to sustain itself during the hot and dry summer weather.

Before choosing a fertilizer, residents are encouraged to have their soil tested. Most lawns in NJ have high phosphorus levels and residents should not add more with their fertilizer. Testing can easily be done through the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Bergen County. Visit their website for details on their program: <https://njaes.rutgers.edu/county/quickinfo.php?Bergen>. If you see signs of insect damage, contact the extension for guidance before administering insecticides.

Excessive Growth Solutions

If you miss a week of mowing or heavy rain causes faster growth, try these solutions for managing the excessive growth.

Double Mow

Set the deck height on the mower to higher than usual, about 1/3 the height of the grass. Reduce the deck height again and mow down another 1/3 of the grass height. Continue until you reach the desired height.

Mulch Excess Clippings in the Garden

Bag or rake the clippings and put them into your garden as mulch. Spread them about 1 inch deep, which will allow cooling of the soil, prevent water evaporation and discourage weed growth. Use caution in an edible garden if you are using pesticides on your lawn.

Mix Clippings with Soil

New Jersey soils will benefit by adding organic matter. Mixing clippings into a clay type soil will allow it to become more productive. Sandy soils allow for more water retention.

Compost

Composting is a great way to naturally manage organic materials, including grass, leaves and some food waste. Compost requires green and brown material, though too much grass (green material) can cause odors and will require turning more often.

Does Mulching Cause Thatch?

No. Grass clippings do not cause thatch. Thatch is caused by the accumulation of dead roots and stems. The more you fertilize your lawn, the faster thatch accumulates.