

As New Jersey residents, we are already helping to reduce pollution and wasted resources by recycling. As Voorhees Township residents, we can do more by eliminating waste at the source. Leave the grass clippings on your lawn when you mow and let nature do the recycling.

Why Cut It & Leave It?

Grass clippings make up a large part of the Township's solid waste stream and account for nearly 200 tons of yard waste annually. Their volume and weight make clippings expensive to transport and collect. In addition, the value of clippings as fertilizer makes their landfill disposal a considerable waste of resources.



Program Benefits

During the average New Jersey growing season (April through October), a 2,500 sq ft lawn will produce over 1,000 lbs of grass clippings. The adoption of Cut It & Leave It

by only 40 homes in Voorhees will therefore reduce the contribution of clippings to the solid waste stream by 10% or more.

Grass clippings also provide a natural fertilizer for growing lawns. In fact, the nitrogen from clippings will add one to two pounds of nitrogen each year to every 1,000 sq ft of lawn. This means that when left on a lawn, clippings will supply one-third or more of the nitrogen needed to keep the grass green and healthy.

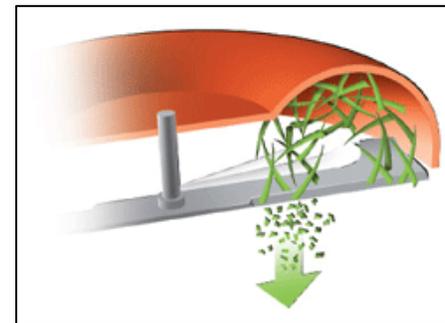
Lastly, leaving freshly cut grass clippings on the lawn will reduce mowing time by 20 to 25% since there is no need to stop and empty the mower's collection bag or haul clippings to the curb. Further time savings are achieved through a reduced need to fertilize.

How It Works

To correctly maintain your lawn, mow high and mow often. Most New Jersey lawns grow well when kept to a height of 2 to 3 inches. Taller grass shades the soil, cooling root systems and minimizing weed growth.

Grass should only be cut when dry and by a mower with a sharp blade. Follow the "one-third rule" when setting the cutting height, limiting grass blade removal to no

more than one-third in a single cutting.



Frequent mowing will produce short clippings that will not cover up the grass surface. You may have to cut the lawn every 7 days when the lawn is growing fast, but only every 7 to 14 days when the lawn is growing more slowly. Clippings quickly settle between the blades of grass where nature recycles the nutrients they contain.

Excessive Lawn Growth

When excessive growth occurs due to rain or a delay in mowing, the most healthy maintenance option for your lawn is to double mow.

To double mow, set the mower higher than usual and cut no more than the top third of the grass. In 2 to 3 days, reduce the mower height and again remove no more than the top third of the grass. Repeat this process until the lawn has reached the desired height.

FAQs

Will grass clippings make your lawn look bad?

No. If a lawn is properly mowed, watered, and fertilized, grass clippings can actually produce a healthier looking lawn. It is important to cut the lawn frequently to produce small clippings that will decompose quickly. If a lawn is not cut frequently and clippings are left on the lawn, it will produce a “hay-like” look, which can be unsightly

Do grass clippings cause thatch and lawn disease?

No. Research has shown that grass roots are the primary cause of thatch, not grass clippings. Thatch is composed primarily of roots, stems, rhizomes, and other plant materials. These plant materials contain large amounts of lignin (fibrous material) and decompose slowly. Grass clippings are approximately 80 to 85% water with only small amounts of lignin, and decompose rapidly.

Do I need a special lawn mower to practice Cut It & Leave It?

No. Although mulching mowers that cut grass blades into small pieces and force them into the lawn are most effective,

they are not required to practice grass recycling.

If you are using a mower with a collection bag, the bag should be removed to allow clippings to drop on the lawn. Mulching blades that produce smaller clippings are also available for most mowers. Lastly, check with your lawn mower manufacturer to see if they produce a mulching retrofit kit for your particular model.

More Information

NJDEP Cut It and Leave It Program

<http://www.nj.gov/dep/dshw/recycling/brochures/recycling%20brochures/grass.pdf>

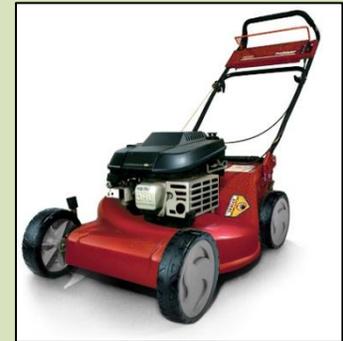
Sustainable Voorhees

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GRASS RECYCLING



Cut It & Leave It

Environmentally Friendly Lawn Care
Presented By:

