

# GRASSCYCLING

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OTTAWA VALLEY WASTE RECOVERY CENTRE

## What is GRASSCYCLING?

Grasscycling is the natural recycling of grass clippings by leaving them on your lawn after mowing. Nutrients and moisture are returned to the soil as clippings decompose.



## How do I GRASSCYCLE?

Grasscycling is easy and takes little work and time! Remember the **3 inch rule**. Let your grass grow 3 inches and cut one inch off. Leave the grass clippings on your lawn. Cut your lawn regularly. If the grass is long cut off short amounts in several mowings rather than all at once.

## Why should I GRASSCYCLE?



- ◆ **Saves time.** By not raking and bagging your grass clippings you could save up to 30 minutes each mowing.
- ◆ **Save money.** Less fertilizer and water are needed. Leaving grass clippings on the lawn returns valuable nutrients including nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus to the soil. *One bag of clippings equals 100 grams of fertilizer!* Being 90 percent water, clippings return moisture to your lawn reducing the need for watering.
- ◆ **You are 'Walking Lightly on the Environment'.** Grasscycling is a simple, easy opportunity for every homeowner to do something good for the environment.
- ◆ **It saves tax dollars.** Leaving grass clippings on the lawn reduces the need for extra Municipal collection, hauling and composting costs.

**“WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR LAWN...ACT NATURALLY!”**

## What is the science behind GRASSCYCLING?

Remember the elementary science term “for every action there is a reaction.” Well that can be applied to Grasscycling. When Grasscycling, allow the grass to grow at least 3 inches and then cut off one inch. This simple action, causes a very important reaction. The longer the grass, the deeper the root system. A deep root system is needed to reach water underground. So by letting your grass grow a little longer, your lawn will more likely withstand drought and develop an increased resistance to weeds and insects.



## Common Myths of GRASSCYCLING

**Myth # 1** Leaving grass clippings on the lawn causes thatch.

**FACT:** Thatch results from abnormally fast growth of roots and other plant tissues and is caused by improper fertilizing and watering. Grass clippings left on the lawn decay quickly and release valuable nutrients back to the existing grass. Grass clippings actually contain sugars that stimulate microbes which facilitate the decomposition of thatch.

**Myth # 2** Grasscycling is messy.

**FACT:** Grass clippings decay quickly and disappear within a day or two. If you are worried about people tracking grass into your house or pool, cut your lawn early enough in the day so the clippings will dry and settle into the already established grass.

**Myth # 3** Grasscycling spreads diseases.

**FACT:** The spores that cause grass diseases are present whether clippings are collected or not. Watering properly, only when needed and keeping your mower blade very sharp for clean cutting will help your lawn resist disease.

**Still have too many grass clippings?** You can backyard compost grass clippings too. For best results mix them with “brown” wastes such as dry leaves, straw or wood chips. Or spread thin layers of grass clippings in your garden around plants or at the base of shrubs and trees. However, do not try this with grass that has been treated with herbicides or pesticides.