

Clean Air Lawn Care

**LESS WORK, LESS EXPENSE,
LESS AIR POLLUTION!**



Help keep unhealthy ozone-forming pollutants out of the air we breathe. Following these lawn care tips will save you money and give you more time to spend on more important things.

LAID-BACK LAWN CARE? IT'S EASY!

 **Longer grass.** Rather than giving your lawn a short buzz-cut; keep it at 3 inches in length. Once the grass reaches a height of 4½ inches, trim it back to 3 inches.

 **Reduce water.** Back in Kindergarten, we learned that water makes things grow. Of course a lawn requires water to remain healthy, but using a lot of water means more mowing along with a higher water bill.

 **Reduce fertilizer.** Do your homework. Many homeowners over-fertilize their lawn and that causes the grass to grow faster. Read lawn product directions carefully. Use only what is needed when it is needed. Remember, applying more lawn care product than needed wastes money!

 **Mulch for lawn health.** Mulch grass clippings back into your lawn. It's less work for you and healthy for your lawn.

 **Consider groundcover.** There are many lovely, low maintenance ground covers that are green, lush and don't require mowing!
Groundcovers are generally easy to maintain.

Lawns and gardens are important because plants generate oxygen. Another benefit is that plants actually remove pollution from the air. That's an excellent reason to plant trees, shrubs, groundcover, flowers and grass.

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OZONE ACTION!
Let's Clear the Air



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BASIC LAWN HEALTH:

Allowing grass to grow to 4½ inches, then trimming it back to 3 inches (instead of 1½) means that most folks can cut back to an “every other week” mowing schedule during the summer. In other words, put less time and work into your lawn and be rewarded with healthy turfgrass and less air pollution from lawn equipment emissions.



The “Cut One-Third” Rule. Research indicates that lawn grass is most healthy when no more than 1/3 of the entire blade is sheared off during any cutting.



The First Cut is the Deepest. For the very first lawn trim in the spring, cut grass way down to 1½ inches. Doing this takes off dead grass ends and promotes “green up.” Then set your mower blade at 3 inches for subsequent lawn mowing.



Lawn Goals. Determine your lawn goals. Do you require the high maintenance, formal “putting green turf” look? If so, then a non-motorized push mower could be right for you. You can mow often without creating air emissions. Or, do you prefer an easy care, longer, lush lawn appearance? Enjoy a nice lawn and cleaner air (not to mention saving time and money) just by adjusting your mower blade to 3 inches high.

Smart fueling practices along with routine maintenance can reduce emissions that generate air pollution. Studies show that gas-powered lawn equipment creates substantial summertime smog (particularly 2-stroke engines). You can make a difference on *Ozone Action! Days* - and during the entire summertime ozone season.

BUYING A NEW LAWNMOWER?

Consider a push, electric, or energy efficient gas mower.

HEALTHY LAWN TIPS - REMEMBER:

1. Let your lawn grow to 4½ inches high.
2. Set the mower blade at 3 inches & keep it sharp!
3. Using the cut one-third rule cut 1½ inches off.
4. Keep fertilizer and water to a minimum.

Got questions about lawn care and how to best maintain foliage? Contact the local county MSU Extension Service. Staff provides lawn and garden advice. Internet address: www.msue.msu.edu