

# Your Lawn Care Plan

Tips for a sustainable and conservation-friendly yard



## Should I change my lawn-care techniques?

Take a look at your lawn. Are you currently using the practices below?

- Lawn consists of common turf grass or Kentucky Blue
- Frequent mowing
- Keeping the grass shorter than three inches
- Watering more than once a month
- Collecting grass clippings
- Disposing of lawn refuse as waste

If so, you may be putting a lot more effort into your lawn than it really requires. Over-maintaining it is costing you more energy, time, and money than it needs to.



## Grass clippings – Let it go!

If you are using a lawnmower that collects all of the grass clippings, consider removing the collection container and allowing the clippings to remain on your lawn. They will compost back into the ground and fertilize your existing grass with the nutrients left behind. Contrary to popular belief, this method does NOT leave brown spots on your lawn or hinder the grass from growing at all. It's actually the opposite!

## Composting – The most natural fertilizer of all!

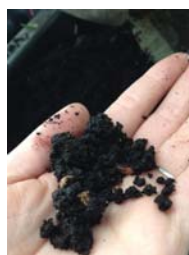
Most organic items from your kitchen, such as vegetable scraps, eggshells, coffee grounds, and other biodegradables, make for great compost ingredients. Also, all of your lawn refuse can be dumped right into that bin instead of left on the road for the city to pick up.

There are many ways to compost – the easiest being a pile of organic material that sits in a bin or three-walled container in a far corner of your property. There are plans online for making your own using anything from three used tires and a PVC pipe with holes, to constructing a tumbling composter from a recycled barrel. Composters can also be purchased from your local hardware store, or online. Whichever way you choose, you can enjoy knowing that composting is a great option for free fertilizer and sustainable landscaping.



Even your grass can be *greener!* From Michigan Wildflower Farm's Eco-Turf Low Maintenance Fescue Mix, this beautiful lawn grows especially slowly once established. That means less mowing!

## Worms are your composting friends!



When you add Red Worms into your compost, you are really adding a bunch of little helpers. They break down the content more quickly, and add helpful bacteria to the entire process. The image at left shows some worms that are actively assisting the composting process at the Saginaw Valley State University Greenhouse. SVSU's program is studying how worms can compost for you.

## Your Lawnmower and You

If you don't have acres to mow, then consider a different lawnmower. Push mowers have been re-invented. Nowadays, they are economic and easy to push. Plus, they won't wake up the neighborhood with the noise of a gas mower.

Another option is an electric mower. They are much quieter than standard gas mowers. They can be plugged in and recharged – no more spilling gas!



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