Help your lawn and the environment

Proper watering, fertilizing and mowing practices are keys to lawn success. These practices if done improperly can harm our water resources.

Do the Right Thing for the Environment
Follow these guidelines to help prevent pollution in lakes and ponds.

Mow High
Mow Kentucky bluegrass lawns to a height of 2.5-3.0 inches. Keeping grass slightly longer in summertime helps it tolerate drought and other stressors. Keep the lawnmower blades sharp and mow often enough that you’re never removing more than 1/3 of the grass plant.

Watering your yard: Deep Root Water
A deep root watering performed less often is more beneficial than a light sprinkling performed more frequently. Water early enough in the day so the grass plants can dry. This will help prevent the growth of fungus.

Return clippings to lawn
Mulching helps conserve an estimated 15 to 50 percent of lawn moisture. It also provides the equivalent of one application of fertilizer per year.

Aerate and dethatch
Consider late summer and fall dethatching and aerating for the best results.

Don’t over fertilize
Test your soil to find out what fertilizer type and rate you will need. Unless you’re starting a new yard or had a soil test showing the need for phosphorous, you must use a zero phosphorous fertilizer. (Phosphorus is indicated by the middle number on the bag.)

Prevent fertilizer and grass clippings from entering the street.
Sweep up additional fertilizer that lands on your driveway, sidewalk or street. Prevent grass clippings and fertilizers from entering our storm drains. They drain directly into our lakes, wetlands, and creeks. Fertilizer and grass clippings add additional phosphorous that promotes unwanted algae and weed growth. Phosphorous harms the water quality of lakes, wetlands and creeks.

You can practice environmentally friendly lawn care techniques that benefit both you and your pocketbook. Follow the tips listed in the chart to the right and you will be on your way to a greener lawn—and you could save a little green in the process.

Lawn maintenance is an April to November process. Timing is important. Applying fertilizers and weed killer at the wrong time is a waste of time and money. The University of Minnesota Extension Service has developed this information to help you build an overall lawn care plan for your yard.

Please save this page for future reference. Post it in your garage or shed, near your lawnmower or lawn care supplies. Most of all, use the techniques listed here. They’ll pay benefits to both you and the community.

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# Lawn Care Guide

Post this information in your garage or shed for handy reference.

This information provided courtesy of the cities of Burnsville, Apple Valley, and Lakeville; Minnesota Department of Agriculture; University of Minnesota; Dakota County Master Gardeners; Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board; Metropolitan Council; Dakota County Environmental Education Program.

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🌱 Indicate time of year when this lawn practice can be done.

🌿 Indicate best time of year to carry out this lawn practice.