

Guidelines for Mowing, Watering and Fertilizing

Follow these guidelines for mowing, watering and fertilizing and you will have a healthy lawn and never have to bag grass clippings again.

Mowing Techniques and Tips

- Any mower can recycle grass clippings. Simply remove the grass catcher. Ask your lawn mower dealer if a special safety plug or adapter kit is needed to convert your mower into a “recycling” mower or have a mulching blade installed.
- Keep grass mowed to 2” – 3” tall
- Do not remove more than 1/3 of the grass blade in any single mowing. If your lawn is kept at 2” tall, do not let it grow higher than 3” before it’s mowed again.
- Keep your mower blade sharp because dull mowers tear the grass blade, injuring the plant and creating a brownish cast to the turf.
- If the grass gets just a bit too high, mow over the clippings a second time to further shred and scatter them.
- If excessive growth occurs between mowings, raise the mower height, mow and then gradually lower it over a span of several mowings. This helps prevent shock to the plants.
- When it’s time to replace your mower, consider buying a mulching, recycling, or a non-polluting reel mower.

Fertilizer Application

- Proper fertilizer application is important. More is not better. Research shows most grasses require only modest levels of nitrogen for good color and controlled growth. Too much makes your lawn grow faster, resulting in more mowing and more clippings.
- Apply fertilizer in late April and again in September. If a third treatment is needed, apply in late May.
- Use ½ lb of nitrogen per 1000 square feet of lawn at each application. To figure this out, divide 100 by twice the percentage of nitrogen in the fertilizer. This will give you the application rate in pounds of fertilizer per 1000 square feet of lawn.

For example:

Fertilizer N-P-K Rating (%)	Divide 100 by Twice the % of Nitrogen	Pounds of Fertilizer to Use per 1000 sq. ft.
12 – 4 – 8	100 /24	= 4.1 lbs
16 – 8 – 8	100/32	=3.1 lbs
20 – 5 – 10	100/40	=2.4 lbs
10 – 10 – 10	100/20	=5.0 lbs

- For slower, more uniform growth, choose fertilizers containing sources of self-release nitrogen such as methylene urea, ureaformaldehyde, sulfer coated urea, or IBDU. The

bag may also read “water insoluble nitrogen” or “slow release nitrogen.” All increase the amount of time the grass can use the nutrient.