

USE NATURAL FERTILIZER

1. **Chemical fertilizers like 10-10-10 are made from natural gas, contributing to global warming.** They are also water soluble and wash into the Pawtuxet River and Narragansett Bay where they encourage algae growth that causes fish kills. Natural fertilizers, like chicken manure, are not water soluble and slowly absorb into the grass, causing less environmental damage. A 25 pound bag of chicken manure will adequately fertilize 1000 square feet of lawn if applied only once a year.



2. **Leave grass clippings on the lawn.** As they breakdown, clippings contribute about one pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet. A University of Connecticut study indicates grass clippings can supply half a lawn's needed nitrogen.

AVOID HERBICIDES AND PESTICIDES

1. **Many pesticides and herbicides are harmful** to people, pets, fish and birds. People and animals inhale airborne pesticides or unknowingly ingest them after playing in the grass.

2. **Pesticides and herbicides filter into ground water.** An EPA survey found that Dacthal, an herbicide most frequently used on lawns, was the most commonly detected chemical in wells.



DON'T WASTE WATER

1. **Lawns guzzle water.** In the summer, at least half of all residential water is used for lawns and other outdoor activities, according to the Kent County Water Authority.



2. **Lawns only need one inch of water a week.** More frequent watering damages grass by encouraging shallow roots. Excessive watering also encourages fertilizer runoff. Use a rain gage or the weather section of the newspaper to measure rain fall and adjust watering. Avoid a sprinkler system which waters regardless of rainfall.



3. **Watering during the morning avoids mid-day evaporation.** Evening watering encourages fungus growth.

4. **Use a rain barrel to store water for garden use**

More information:

University of Rhode Island – www.healthylandscapes.org

Brooklyn Botanical Garden – www.bbg.org

Kent County Water Authority – www.kentcountywater.org

New England Wildflower Society – www.newfs.org

Rhode Island Wild Plant Society – www.riwps.org

Produced by the Pawtuxet Village Farmers Market with a grant from the New England Grassroots Environmental Fund. The market is open Saturdays from 9 to 12 from May to November in the Rhodes on the Pawtuxet parking lot on Rhodes Place, just off Broad Street in Cranston's Pawtuxet Village. Design by juan.cano@cox.net.



This brochure was printed locally at Black Cat Graphics. 50% Kenaf and 50% post-consumer paper waste.



What causes the most damage to the environment?

A Commuting an hour to work every day by car

B Buying fruit flown to Rhode Island from Chile

C Mowing the lawn

C Mowing the lawn.

Amount of pollution after running for 1 hour.



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that a gasoline push mower emits as much pollution in 1 hour as driving a car for 11 hours. Riding mowers produce as much pollution in 1 hour as driving a car for 34 hours.

Other garden tools with wasteful two-cycle engines and no pollution controls, like leaf blowers and weed whackers, also emit large amounts of pollutants that contribute to global warming and worsen air quality. In addition, they increase noise and dust levels.



Small engines, however, are responsible for only part of the damage caused by residential lawns. Fertilizer contributes to mass fish kills in Narragansett Bay. Weed killers pollute our water and poison our pets. Trucks spew carbon dioxide as they drive through our neighborhoods to collect yard waste. And watering drains our water supplies.

SIMPLE STEPS TO MAKE YOUR LAWN GREENER

(Recommended by the EPA and the Brooklyn Botanical Garden)

MOW CAREFULLY

1. **Use a hand mower** and other hand tools instead of machines powered by fossil fuels. In addition to eliminating harmful emissions, hand tools provide exercise.
2. **Mow your lawn less often**, especially in hot weather. The University of Rhode Island recommends maintaining grass 2 to 3 inches high to encourage root growth and discourage weeds.
3. **If you must use a power mower, switch to electric.**
4. **Consider replacing part of your lawn with a vegetable garden** or native plants that do not require mowing, fertilizing or regular watering. The New England Wildflower Society (newfs.org) in Framingham, MA, sells plants and seeds as does the Rhode Island Wild Plant Society (riwps.org).
5. **Hire an environmentally responsible lawn care company.**



PAMPER YOUR GRASS

1. **Aerate the turf** using a hand and foot powered aerator
2. **Top dress the lawn with 1/8 inch to 1/4 inch of loam or compost.** Start a backyard compost pile, but screen it before adding it to the lawn.

Enjoy fresh produce from your vegetable garden!

