

GRASSCYCLING

It's Nature's Way of Recycling



DISCOVER THE
SECRET TO A
HEALTHIER, MORE
BEAUTIFUL LAWN

 **Region of Peel**
Working for you

DON'T SPEND YOUR SUMMER CARING FOR YOUR LAWN

How much time do you spend each week cutting your grass, stopping every few turns to remove the grass catcher, shaking the clippings into a garbage bag, then reattaching the grass catcher? Or do you finish cutting and rake the grass into piles, which you then put into paper yard waste bags and carry to the curb on your collection day?

By the time Peel residents have finished, they have hauled approximately 10,000 tonnes (45 kilograms per household) of grass clippings to the curb each year. In the summer, up to 35 per cent of yard material collected at the curb is grass, unnecessarily increasing collection and processing costs.



HOW TO GRASSCYCLE...

- **MOW HIGH AND OFTEN**

Set your mower height to 5–6 centimetres (2 inches). At this height, there is less shock to the grass plant, deeper roots are produced, moisture is conserved and weeds cannot easily take root when the soil surface is shaded.

Even though mowing at 5–6 centimetres (2 inches) requires mowing slightly more often, research shows that most homeowners still reduce mowing time by about one-third.

- **MOW LATE IN THE DAY**

The grass clippings will dry and settle overnight leaving little or no mess the next day. The clippings will disappear in a few days.

- **KEEP YOUR MOWER BLADE SHARP**

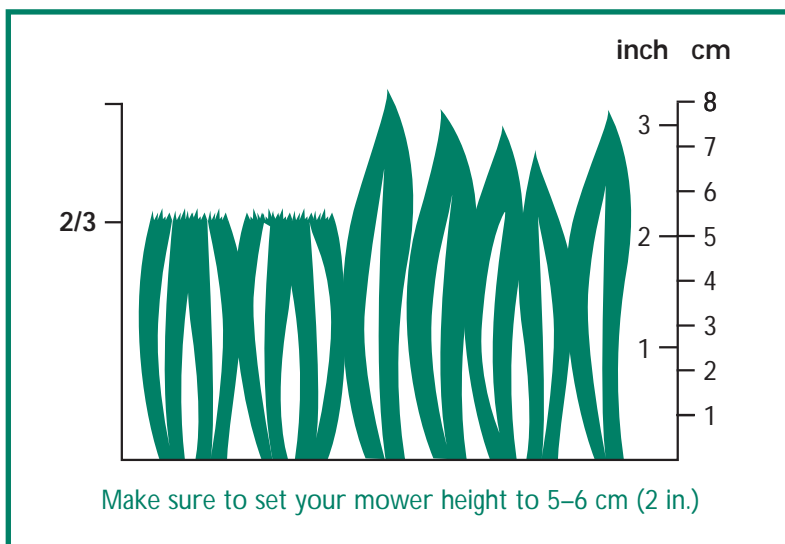
Sharp mower blades aid in the mulching of your grass allowing for a more rapid breakdown of the clippings. Dull mowers tear the grass blade, injure the plant and cause ragged, brown edges on the top of the grass, inviting disease.

- **MOW WHEN THE GRASS IS DRY**

Wet clippings may lie on top of the grass; dry clippings settle between the grass blades more readily, giving a clean, neat appearance to your lawn and minimizing tracking clippings into the house.

- **MOW OVER CLUMPS OF GRASS**

If your lawn is really overgrown, or if you take off more than a third of the height of the blade, it may result in excessive clippings. To eliminate the clumps of grass, simply run over the clippings a second time, or rake them up and deposit them in thin layers into your backyard composter.



- **ANY MOWER CAN DO THE JOB**

If you plan to buy a new mower, consider purchasing a mulching mower. Mulching mowers are designed to shred and scatter clippings so they fall between the grass plants.



GRASSCYCLING DOES NOT CAUSE THATCH

Thatch is an accumulation of dead roots and stems, most often caused by over-watering or over fertilizing. Grass clippings left on the lawn decompose quickly and do not cause thatch.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR LAWN HEALTHY USING LESS WATER

- Do not over water the lawn. A lawn requires only 1.25cm (1/2 inch) of water, twice a week to stay healthy. This amounts to two watering sessions of a half hour each. This will encourage deep root growth and help prevent disease and stress injury to your lawn.
- Water in the morning, between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m., to avoid losing up to 60 per cent of the water to evaporation.
- Avoid watering at night. A damp lawn after dark is more prone to disease.
- Grass clippings are 80 per cent water. Leaving clippings on the lawn will prevent excessive moisture loss and return water to the soil.

HOW TO HAVE A BEAUTIFUL LAWN WITH LESS FERTILIZER, TIME AND MONEY

- **Use less fertilizer** – More is not better! Most types of grass require modest levels of nitrogen for good colour and controlled growth. Excess fertilizer makes grass grow faster, requiring more mowing and can contribute to thatch, and other serious problems.
- **Fertilize in the fall** – A fall application boosts spring growth. Fertilize in spring if the lawn needs it, and let clippings do the job through the summer. Clippings can supply a third or more of your grass nutrient needs.
- **For slower, more uniform growth** – Choose fertilizers with the label "water insoluble nitrogen," or "slow release nitrogen." These increase the amount of time the grass has to use the nutrients.



FREE UP YOUR TIME— GRASSCYCLE

When you leave grass clippings on the lawn so that nature can return the nutrients stored in the clippings back to the soil as they decompose, you are grasscycling.

Properly-mowed grass clippings left on the lawn settle quickly between the growing blades of grass. There, they shelter the roots from the sun and conserve moisture. As clippings break down, they release moisture and nutrients into the soil.

You can save as much as a third of your lawn mowing time by removing your grass catcher and letting grass clippings stay on the lawn.

While you relax, save time and money, those grass clippings are hard at work keeping your lawn healthy and green.



The Region of Peel provides municipal waste management services in the Cities of Mississauga and Brampton and the Town of Caledon.

For more information on our waste management programs and services, call the **WASTELINE** at **905-791-9499**.

Visit the Region's
Web site at
peelregion.ca