



Recycling Fact Sheet

BERGEN COUNTY UTILITIES AUTHORITY Box 9 Little Ferry, NJ 07643 201-641-2552

Grass Recycling



Lawn Hints

- Fertilizing in late summer and late fall (instead of early spring) will help promote strong roots and reduce rapid growth in summer.
- The time saved by not bagging clippings can amount to 20-25% of the average mowing time.

During its peak growing season, grass clippings account for nearly 1/3 of all waste by weight. In an effort to reduce this amount, grass clippings may be left on the lawn or used in composting.

Grass clippings are valuable resources because they are high in nutrient content. They usually contain approximately 4% nitrogen, 2% potassium and 1/2% phosphorous. All of these nutrients should be returned to the lawn.

CUT IT & LEAVE IT

Grass clippings left on the lawn act as a natural fertilizer. The nitrogen found in grass clippings helps to promote thick green growth and a strong root system. Lawn clippings will not contribute to thatch problems, as thatch is formed from the accumulation of dead roots and stems. It is important, however, that clippings not be left to remain as a mat on top of the lawn.

COMPOSTING WITH GRASS

Grass clippings are an asset to a compost pile, and can serve as a source of organic matter for soil improvement when incorporated into the garden. When composting, grass clippings must be mixed with another bulking material, such as leaves. Any compost pile which con-

tains grass should be turned frequently in order to continually reoxygenate the materials, thereby minimizing any of the unpleasant odors associated with matted grass.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

Grass clippings can be used as garden mulch. After drying in the sun, clippings can be spread on garden soil to check weed growth, reduce soil spattering and moderate soil temperatures.

Alternatives to planting grass are increasing the size of shrub beds and growing ground covers. Ground covers such as Pachysandra, English Ivy and Periwinkle can be grown successfully in filtered light and shaded areas.

Since Bergen County has prohibited grass clippings from being deposited in landfills, every municipality has established their own method of grass collection disposal. For more information about your community's program, contact your local municipal recycling coordinator.

For more information on recycling, please call the **BCUA ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS HOTLINE:** 201-807-5825 or visit us on-line at www.bcua.org

DISPOSING OF GRASS CLIPPINGS

Grass Clippings are to be placed in Paper Recycling Bags Only. Clippings placed in garbage cans, or plastic bags will not be picked up. Residents can arrange a pick-up of clippings by calling the DPW; Clippings can also be dropped off at the DPW.

Distributed by the Bergen County Utilities Authority (revised 7/2004)