

Why Bag No More?

Recycling yardwaste or grasscycling back to your lawn makes good sense for many reasons.

Specifically:

- ☞ By state law yardwaste can not be disposed of in the landfill. Even if allowed, landfilling is a very expensive option that provides no environmental benefit.
- ☞ To comply with this state law, yardwaste is collected separately and transported to a composting facility. Omaha taxpayers pay \$85 per ton to collect, haul, and compost yardwaste. Composting, wherever it occurs, provides an environmental benefit.
- ☞ Grasscycling is easier than composting and just as beneficial.

Benefits:

Returning grass clippings to the turf will save the homeowner time and money.

⌚ Time ⌚

With the Bag No More lawn care plan, stopping every 10 minutes to empty the mower bag is no longer necessary. By eliminating this procedure, it is estimated that one can mow a lawn in $\frac{1}{3}$ less time.

\$ Money \$

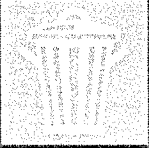
Grass clippings contain approximately 3-4% nitrogen by weight. By returning them to the lawn, one can supply 25% of the turf's annual fertilizer requirement. Another cost-saver is the elimination of the need to purchase paper bags or extra trash cans to place clippings in. These two factors can save the average homeowner between \$50 and \$100 each year.

For more information about the "Bag No More" program, contact the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension in Douglas/Sarpy County at (402) 444-7804.

This brochure is adapted from "Don't Bag It," Texas A & M Agricultural Extension Service.

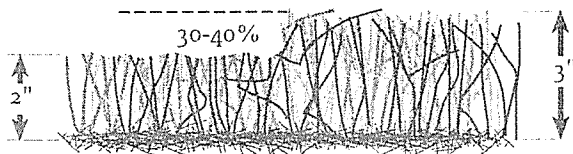
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Yardwaste Collection & Processing	<h1>Bag No More!</h1> <p><i>A common sense lawn care plan</i></p>  <p>Issued in cooperation with the Douglas/Sarpy Cooperative Extension Service <i>Prepared by:</i> John Fech Extension Educator-Horticulture.</p>
	
Recycling Collection & Disposal	
	
Garbage Collection & Processing	
	
Air Quality Monitoring & Enforcement	
	
Wastewater Monitoring & Enforcement	
Official Program City of Omaha Public Works Department Environmental Quality Division	

Mowing Plan

When the proper mowing frequency is maintained, the clippings filter into the turf canopy, without detracting from the beauty of the lawn, or increasing the thatch layer. When mowing, follow the "1/3 rule." This states that no more than 1/3 of the vegetation (from the soil line to the leaf tips) should be removed during any one mowing.



Do not remove more than 30-40% of the leaf with any mowing!

To implement the 1/3 rule, consider the following mowing schedule:

Grass Species	Mower Setting in Spring/Fall	Mow When Grass Is
Kentucky Bluegrass	2"	3"
Perennial Ryegrass	2"	3"
Fine-leaf Fescue	2"	3"
Turf Type Tall Fescue	2 1/2" - 3"	3 1/2" - 4"
Common Tall Fescue	2 1/2" - 3"	3 1/2" - 4"
Buffalograss	2"	3"
Zoysiagrass	2"	3"

The above settings are appropriate in the Spring and Fall. In June, July and August, raise the mowing height one inch to cool the turf plant and reduce stress.

If one's mower does not adapt to clipping return, place them on the compost pile. Compost makes an excellent soil amendment for flower and vegetable gardens, especially in the clay or sandy soils that are predominant in this area. Brochures on constructing compost structures are available at local extension offices. Grass clippings also make a good mulching material for flowerbeds and vegetable gardens.

Fertilization Plan

The rate of fertilizer application, the frequency of application, and the source of the nitrogen will determine how fast the lawn grows. The following fertilizing plan is designed to allow the lawn to grow at a reasonable rate and still have an attractive color.

Turf Species	Timing	Nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft.
K, P, T	April 20-28	0.5 to 1 lb.
B, Z	May 5-15	0.5 to .75 lb.
K, P, T	June 5-10	0.75 to 1 lb.
K, P, T	Sept 1-10	0.75 to 1 lb.
K, P, T	Oct 20 - Nov 10	1 to 1.5 lb.

K - Kentucky Bluegrass T - Tall Fescue
 B - Buffalograss P - Perennial Ryegrass
 Z - Zoysiagrass

For slow, even growth, use a fertilizer containing either sulfur-coated urea or urea-formaldehyde as a nitrogen source rather than those such as an ammonium sulfate, urea or ammonium nitrate that tend to produce a very fast growth for short periods. The nitrogen source is especially important for early summer applications. Check the fertilizer label to determine the specific nitrogen source.

Amount of Fertilizer






The amount of fertilizer to apply can be easily calculated. Divide the pounds nitrogen/1000 ft. desired by the first number in the fertilizer analysis expressed as a percentage.

Desired N/1000 sq. ft.	Analysis	Fertilizer Needed per 1000 sq. ft.
1.5 lb.	28-3-6	5.4 lbs.
1.25 lb.	28-3-6	4.5 lbs.
1.0 lb.	28-3-6	3.6 lbs.
0.75 lb.	28-3-6	2.7 lbs.
0.50 lb.	28-3-6	1.8 lbs.

Next, simply multiply the fertilizer needed/1000 sq. ft. by the number of 1000 ft. units in your lawn. For example, if 1.0 lb. N/1000 ft. is desired on a 5000 sq. ft. lawn, multiply 3.6 lbs. times 5 to determine that 18 lbs. of fertilizer should be applied to the lawn.

Water Plan

Turfgrasses vary in their need for water. In rank order from the greatest need for water to the most drought tolerant:

1. Kentucky Bluegrass 
2. Perennial Ryegrass 
3. Tall Fescue 
4. Zoysiagrass 
5. Buffalograss 

During the driest period of summer, our lawns usually require about one inch of water every five to six days. Most hose sprinklers put out one-fourth to one-third inch of water per hour, so they would need to run approximately four hours in one spot. If water runs off the lawn before one inch is applied, turn the sprinkler off, let the water soak in for about one hour, then continue watering.

The best time to water is early morning, so less water is lost by evaporation. The worst time to water is in the evening because the lawn stays wet all night, which encourages disease development. Lawns watered too frequently tend to develop shallow root systems, which may make them more susceptible to grub damage and heat/drought stress.

Water Use Tips

In the summer, half the water piped into our homes goes back out through hoses onto lawns and gardens. Here are a few tips which will make each drop count:

- Sprinklers running longer than they should waste water. Set a kitchen timer as a reminder to turn off sprinklers, or purchase a timer for your outdoor faucet.
- Driveways, sidewalks and gutters don't need watering. Avoid watering on windy days when sprinkler coverage is difficult to predict.
- Water running down a driveway won't get a car cleaner. Use a bucket of soapy water to wash a car, using a hose only for rinsing.