

## Grasscycling: An Even *Better* Way to Recycle Grass Clippings.

In Montgomery County, it's against the law to dispose of yard trimmings (grass, leaves, brush, and garden trimmings) in the trash.

Since 1994, the County has collected yard trim materials placed in paper lawn bags or in reusable containers at the curb and taken them to the Montgomery County Shady Grove Processing Facility and Transfer Station. From there the materials are transported to the County's Composting Facility in Dickerson, where yard trim materials are composted into beneficial soil conditioner products called Leafgro and Compro.


However, by grasscycling at home, you will be helping to reduce the amount of material that the County needs to process at its facilities. Through an agreement with the residents in the Dickerson community, up to 77,000 tons annually of yard trim materials can be processed at the Composting Facility. Any excess amount of yard trim materials must then be delivered to other composting/recycling facilities at additional costs.



Montgomery County, Maryland  
Division of Solid Waste Services  
Waste Reduction and Recycling Section

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This information is available in an alternate format  
by calling Alan Pultyniewicz at 240-777-6480.

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# Grasscycling: Just Mow and Go

Find Out Why Grasscycling Is the Easy Way to  
Grow a Beautiful Lawn.

## Grasscycling. It's Only Natural.

Grasscycling simply means recycling grass clippings—but instead of collecting your grass clippings as you mow and placing them in paper lawn bags or in reusable containers for curbside recycling collection, you can recycle your grass clippings right in your own yard. It's fast, easy, and simple.

Through mowing at proper intervals, grasscycling produces short grass particles that fall to the soil surface and quickly break down. The result: the release of valuable nutrients that fertilize the lawn and the added organic matter that conserves moisture and protects against temperature extremes. Grasscycling eliminates the need to use commercial fertilizers and reduces the amount of yard trim materials that must be collected and processed by the County.

## Why Grasscycle?

- ✂ **Save time.** Grasscycling typically cuts the time spent on lawn chores by 40 percent.
- ✂ **Feed your lawn.** Grasscycling protects and nourishes your lawn, eliminating the need to use commercial fertilizers.
- ✂ **Protect the environment.** Grasscycling protects our waterways by slowing runoff from rain and melting snow, preventing soil erosion, and trapping sediments and chemicals.
- ✂ **Reduce costs.** Grasscycling reduces the need to buy commercial fertilizers, and lawn care service providers may charge less if you ask them to stop bagging your grass clippings and pass the savings on to you.



## Start Grasscycling Today!

Why collect grass clippings, place them in reusable containers or paper bags, and drag them to the curb when you can simply leave the clippings on the lawn? For the best results, just follow these easy steps:

- ✂ **Sharpen mower blades at least once a year.** Dull blades can shred grass, causing browning and a ragged appearance—and creating an entryway for disease.
- ✂ **Make sure the grass is dry.** Wet grass cuts poorly, clumps, and can clog your mower.
- ✂ **Mow when the grass needs cutting.** Mow at least once a week, cutting the grass before or when it reaches a height of four inches (or 1.5 inches for Bermuda and Zoysia grass). If your grass starts to clump, you'll know you waited too long to cut.
- ✂ **Follow the "One-Third Rule."** Never cut more than one-third of the length of the blade of grass at one time. Set the mower's blade height at about three inches (or about one inch for Bermuda and Zoysia grass).
- ✂ **If you frequently water, water appropriately.** Water your lawn only when necessary—when grass loses color, becomes dull, or doesn't spring back when you walk on it. Provide about one inch of water per week, preferably in the early morning when less water is lost to evaporation.



- ✂ **Consider a mulching mower.** Any lawnmower can grasscycle; all you need to do is remove the bag. Mulching mowers cut grass clippings into smaller pieces that decompose even more quickly.
- ✂ **Tell your landscaper.** Landscaping contractors can grasscycle too. They may be happy to save the time and effort to bag clippings—and may charge you less if you ask.

## Don't Fall for Myths: Get the Facts.

**Myth:** Grasscycling causes ugly thatch that will ruin my lawn.

**Fact:** Excessive thatch is composed of grass roots, not grass clippings. Thatch build-up is caused by improper fertilization and short, frequent watering that encourages root systems to remain shallow.

**Myth:** Grasscycling looks messy.

**Fact:** Grass is composed of up to 85 percent water, so short grass clippings disappear within a day or two. When a lawn is properly mowed and watered, grasscycling actually creates a greener, healthier looking lawn.

**Myth:** Grasscycling causes lawn disease.

**Fact:** Grass clippings won't increase the risk of disease for a properly maintained lawn. Diseases are caused by improper watering and fertilizing.

