

Resources

The following BCUA program information and publications can be obtained by contacting the Bergen County Utilities Authority Environmental Hotline at 201-807-5825 or by visiting the BCUA web site at www.bcua.org.

- ❑ [Bergen County Environmental Shopping Guide](#)
- ❑ [BCUA Comprehensive Guide to Waste Reduction](#)
- ❑ [Backyard Composting in Bergen County](#)
- ❑ [Purchasing a Backyard Composter](#)
- ❑ [Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program](#)
- ❑ [Computer Recycling](#)
- ❑ [Confidential Paper Shredding Program](#)
- ❑ [Tire Recycling Program](#)
- ❑ [Proper Disposal of Expired Medication](#)

Other WEB Resources

- [Bergen County, NJ](#)
- [Bergen County Agricultural Extension Office](#)
- [Association of New Jersey Household Hazardous Waste Coordinators](#)
- [Association of New Jersey Recyclers](#)
- [Solid Waste Association of North America](#)
- [New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste](#)
- [United States Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Solid Waste](#)



Bergen County



A Guide to Bergen County's Grass Reduction Program

Distributed by
Bergen County Utilities Authority
P.O. Box 9
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www.bcua.org



— Cut it and leave it —



During the summer months, grass clippings can account for as much as one-third of the residential solid waste stream in Bergen County. As a Bergen County resident, you probably already recycle material such as newspaper, glass, aluminum cans, and more. However, many people may not realize that another material that is easily recyclable is right under their feet, **GRASS**. By leaving grass clippings on the lawn when you mow, you're letting nature do the recycling for you. Grass clippings provide a natural fertilizer for your growing lawn.

During the growing season (April through October), a 5,000 square foot lawn will provide one ton (2,000 pounds) of grass clippings. By just "cutting it and leaving it" think of the amount of waste that you will be diverting from the solid waste stream, not to mention the tax savings for your town due to lower disposal costs.

By following these easy guidelines, you can "cut it and leave it" and have a healthier lawn!

How to "Cut it and leave it"

To maintain your lawn properly, do not cut more than the top third of your lawn so the small clippings will filter down to the soil. Since these clippings will provide a natural fertilizer, your lawn will be healthier. Most New Jersey lawns grow well when they are mowed to about 2 to 3 inches. The tall grass will shade the soil and cool the grass roots, resulting in a healthier lawn.

Will thatch be a problem?

No. Thatch is formed from the accumulation of dead roots and stems, not grass clippings. The more you fertilize and water your lawn, the faster it grows and the faster thatch accumulates.



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Saving time and money

Homeowners who leave grass clippings on the lawn will actually reduce their total annual mowing time by 20-25%. You'll save time because you won't have to worry about stopping and bagging your clippings and then bringing the clippings to the curb.

You'll save money on grass bags and fertilizer while your municipality saves on solid waste disposal costs.

Simple Tips...

- Try purchasing a mulching lawn mower or adding a mulching attachment to your current mower.
- Avoid mowing more than the top third of the growing grass.
- Don't over fertilize your lawn. Most home lawns require three applications of fertilizer per year. To determine specific lawn growing needs, contact your local Rutgers Cooperative Extension Office for a soil test.

Alternatives

Mulch clippings into your garden. Place about an inch of clippings directly on the soil around plantings to moderate soil temperature and weed growth.

Incorporate clippings into the soil. Since most Bergen County soils are low in organic material, mixing grass clippings directly into the garden soil will add valuable organic material.

Compost you clippings. Grass clippings are an excellent addition to your backyard leaf compost pile. Do not add more than one-third grass clippings to your compost pile. If your compost begins to produce odor, add composted leaves to help aerate the grass clippings.

