

# Fall Lawn Care

While most people know that spring and summer are important seasons for taking care of their lawns, did you know that the fall is just as important? Here are a few tips for fall lawn care that will help keep your lawn healthy all year long and will help protect water quality.

## Mowing Your Lawn

- Three inches is the rule! Keep your lawn three inches high during the fall. It will help hold moisture in the plant, reduce stress and shade out weeds.
- Avoid dumping grass clippings down storm drains or in waterways, leave your clippings on your lawn. You'll need less fertilizer if you leave clippings on your lawn!

## Mulch

- Those colorful leaf "bits" provide much-needed organic matter for your soil. As leaves fall onto your lawn, chip the leaves into smaller pieces by running over them several times with your lawn mower. Leaves can also be used as mulch in your gardens beds. Be sure to keep leaves away from storm drains and out of waterways.
- If your mulch is a little thin or absent, add more to flower beds and any other areas where grass and weeds are unwanted. Three inches of double-shredded hardwood or shredded leaf mulch will also help to retain soil moisture, prevent soil erosion, and enhance soil quality.

## Feed in the Fall

- Fall is generally the most important time of the year for applying fertilizers.
- Be sure to test your soil if you haven't done so recently and use your soil test results to determine proper application rates.

## Lawn Fertilizers

- Slow-Release Fertilizers require fewer applications because they supply plants with a steady supply of nutrients over an extended period of time.
- Look for the Earth Friendly Fertilizer Sticker on products at your local Ace or Great Lakes Ace Hardware store. Visit <http://www.crowc.org/stormwater-protection/lawn-fertilizer/> to find a store near you.



The Clinton River Watershed Council website provides some useful information on lawncare practices. <http://www.crowc.org/stormwater-protection/>