

GRASS clippings make up a surprisingly large portion of California's waste stream. Increasingly, as California communities work to reach the State mandate to cut the amount of trash sent to landfills, they are using grasscycling to reduce the amount of green materials generated in urban landscapes.



What is Grasscycling?
Grasscycling is the natural recycling of grass by leaving clippings on the lawn when mowing. Grass clippings decompose quickly, returning valuable nutrients back into the soil.



Enjoy A Healthier Lawn!

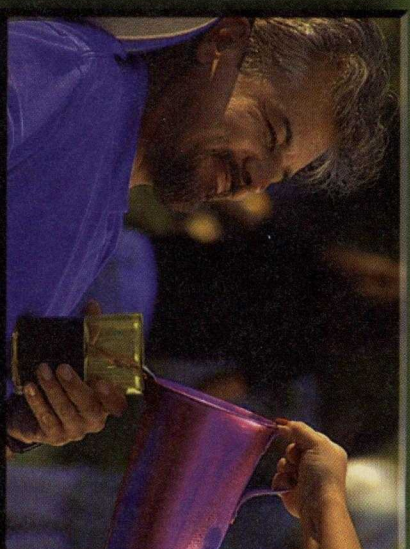
- Grass clippings add beneficial organic matter to the soil, which helps make lawns greener and healthier.

Save Money!

- Grass clippings act as a natural fertilizer and can reduce fertilizer requirements by 15-20 percent.
- Green waste collection programs are costly, and grasscycling can help keep garbage collection rates down.



- ### Save Time!
- Grasscycling saves time and the hassle of bagging, raking, and disposing grass clippings.



- ### Help The Environment!
- Reduces yard waste.
 - Reduces turfgrass fertilizer and water requirements that can minimize toxic runoff entering storm drains and polluting creeks and rivers.



Tips for Successful Grasscycling

Mowing

- Cut grass when surface is dry.
- Keep mower blades sharp.
- Follow the "1/3 rule"—mow often enough so that no more than 1/3 the length of the grass blade is cut in any one mowing.

Watering

- Water early in the morning to reduce evaporation and disease.
- Deep, infrequent watering produces a deeper, extensive root system.
- Lawns watered too frequently develop shallow root systems that make them more susceptible to stress and disease.

Fertilizing

- Apply small quantities of fertilizer more frequently rather than larger amounts occasionally for moderate, even growth.
- Avoid using large quantities of fast-acting fertilizers.
- Overfertilizing can weaken a lawn by causing excessive top growth, which can make it more susceptible to disease.

Commonly Asked Questions

Will grasscycling make my lawn look bad?

No! Follow the 1/3 rule—mow often enough so that no more than 1/3 of the length of the grass is cut—the short clippings decompose quickly and will not cover the grass surface.

Does grasscycling cause thatch buildup?

No! Research has shown that grass roots and stems are the primary cause of thatch, not grass clippings. Roots and stems contain large amounts of lignin (wood), a substance that decomposes very slowly. In contrast, grass clippings are approximately 80–85 percent water with only small amounts of lignin, and they decompose rapidly.

Does grasscycling spread lawn disease?

No! Improper watering and fertilizing are the primary causes of turfgrass disease. If a favorable environment for disease is present, it will occur whether grass clippings are left on the lawn or not.



Does grasscycling require special equipment?

Refer to your owner's manual or contact a local lawnmower dealer to learn if you can safely grasscycle. You may need to purchase a retrofit kit, and your mower dealer can assist you with selecting the correct one. Mulching mowers make grasscycling easy by cutting grass blades into small pieces and forcing them into the soil. Electric mulching mowers can also help reduce air pollution.

Are there alternatives to grasscycling?

Yes! Grasscycling does not work in every situation. Prolonged wet weather, mower breakdowns, or infrequent mowing are situations where grass clippings should probably be bagged since a large number of clippings may be generated. But don't throw the clippings away! Add clippings to your compost pile, or use them as mulch around trees, flowerbeds, and shrubs.

For more information, contact your local University of California Cooperative Extension office or visit the CIWMB web site at www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Organics/Gardening/.

The Integrated Waste Management Board (IWMB) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in access to its programs. IWMB publications are available in accessible formats upon request by calling the Public Affairs Office at (916) 341-6300. Persons with hearing impairments can reach the IWMB through the California Relay Service, 1-800-735-2929.

© 1999, 2003 by the California Integrated Waste Management Board. All rights reserved. This publication, or parts thereof, may not be reproduced without permission.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, Flex Your Power and visit www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html.

Pub# 443-994011

Revised May 2002

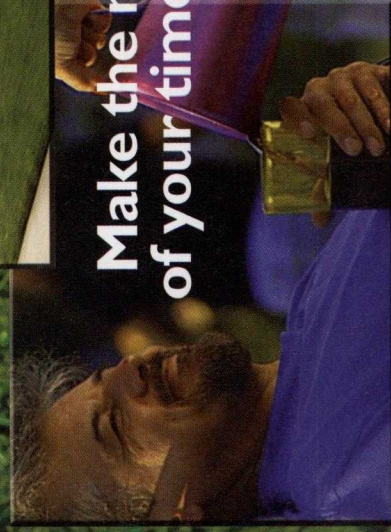
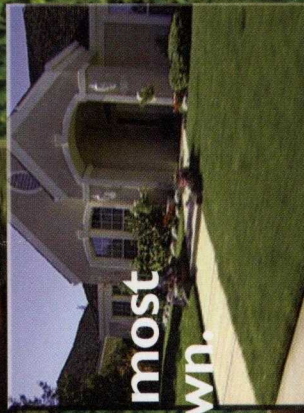
♻️ Printed on New Leaf Reincarnation, 50 percent postconsumer, 100 percent recycled and processed chlorine free.



GRASSCYCLE!



Make the most
of your lawn.



Make the most
of your time.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
**INTEGRATED WASTE
MANAGEMENT BOARD**

P.O. Box 4025
Sacramento, CA 95812-4025

Visit our Web site at: www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Organics/