

## Other composting brochures

The following brochures are available through the Regional District of Nanaimo or by download on the RDN Solid Waste website at [www.rdn.bc.ca](http://www.rdn.bc.ca):



100%



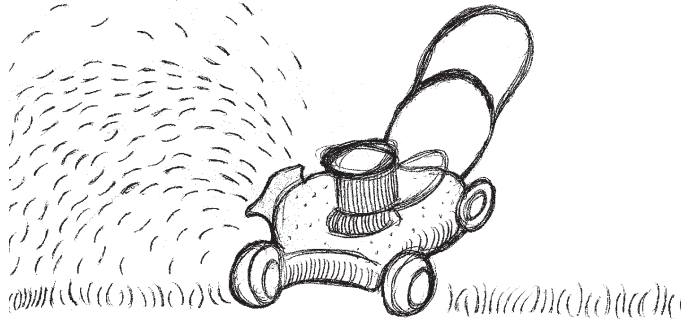
### For more information:

- Visit the RDN Solid Waste Departments website at [www.rdn.bc.ca](http://www.rdn.bc.ca) for Grasscycling links and composting resources.
- Contact the RDN Solid Waste Department at 250-390-6560 (Nanaimo area) or 250-954-3792 (Parksville-Qualicum area).

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Beyond  
Recycling

# GRASSCYCLING



## What is grasscycling?

Reduce yard waste

Save Water...

## What is grasscycling?

Grasscycling simply means leaving grass clippings on the lawn after mowing. This allows organic material to cycle back into the soil resulting in:

- Less yard waste produced
- Less watering required for a healthy lawn
- Less need for fertilizing
- Savings in time and money

It's a snap and works wonders for your lawn!

## Why grasscycle?

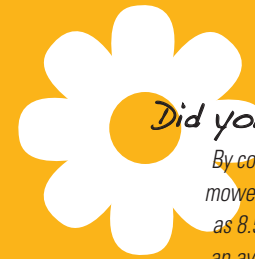
It's easy. Grasscycled clippings disappear into your lawn leaving it looking healthy and green. There's no more need to collect your grass clippings for composting or disposal.

## Save time!

You can cut the amount of time you spend on your lawn by over 35% because grasscycling eliminates collecting clippings and reduces the need for watering and fertilizing.

## Save money!

- Buy less fertilizer. Grass clippings left on the lawn can provide up to 25% of your lawn's fertilizer requirements.
- Save gas money spent driving to the landfill or transfer station to dispose of clippings.
- Any mower can be used to grasscycle. No special equipment is needed but check your owner's manual first.



## Did you know?

By collecting grass clippings with your bagging mower, the accumulation of clippings is as much as 8.5 tonnes per acre per season. That means an average-sized lawn can produce four tonnes of clippings in just one summer!

## Have a healthier lawn and save water!

- Grass clippings contain the same nutrients found in lawn fertilizers: nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium. Clippings left on the lawn act as a slow release fertilizer, returning these nutrients back to your lawn as they decompose.
- Grass clippings help to shade and protect the roots of your lawn.
- Grass clippings reduce water lost by evaporation – an important fact with summer watering restrictions imposed throughout the Regional District of Nanaimo and its member municipalities.

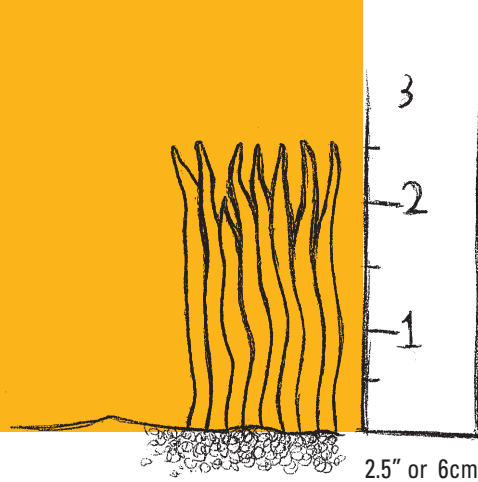


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REGIONAL  
DISTRICT  
OF NANAIMO



## How do I grasscycle?

A few simple changes can get you started...

- Take that bag off the mower! Ensure discharge chutes are covered.
- Leave short grass clippings on your lawn.

## Let it grow!

- Let your lawn grow a little higher to at least 6.5 cm or 2.5 inches. A longer grass blade provides more protection from heat and water loss, aids a healthy root system, and helps shade out weed seedlings.
- Set your lawnmower for a cutting height of 6.5 cm or 2.5 inches. This may result in more frequent mowing during peak growing seasons and less often in late summer and fall.

## Let it lie!

- Mow when grass is dry. Wet grass tends to clump. If this happens, simply re-mow or collect the excess for your composter.


## Mulch it!

- As a mulch, clippings look neat and stay in place. Only a layer of 3 to 4 inches is needed to choke out weeds and seal in moisture.

## Keep it sharp!

- Keep your mower blade sharp for best results.
- Specially designed "mulching mowers" produce fine grass clippings and blow them into the turf.

## Water wisely!

- Water deeply and infrequently. Early morning or late evening is best because the least amount of water is lost to evaporation.
- One inch of water a week is all that's needed to keep a lawn with a good soil base healthy.
- Water only during allocated times and avoid watering if rain is forecast. 
- Gain more free time and save water by letting your lawn go brown or dormant over the summer. If it doesn't rain, watering slowly and deeply once a month will ensure the lawn recovers in the fall. Avoid walking or playing on dormant lawns.

## Add nitrogen to your compost!

- If you bag or collect your lawn clippings put them to use in your compost pile.
- Freshly cut lawn clippings are rich in nitrogen and will heat up on their own when added to a composter.
- Because of their high water content, grass clippings can pack down and become slimy. Avoid this by adding clippings in thin layers, and alternating with brown carbon-rich material such as dry leaves and straw.



## Did you know?

Your garden will benefit from the humus produced by composting. Adding compost will improve the texture of clay and sandy soils and restore essential nutrients. Your flowers, plants and vegetables will thrive!



## No thatch!

- Grasscycling doesn't cause thatch. Grass clippings are 85% water and breakdown quickly. Thatch is a build-up of grass roots and stems. Shallow watering is the main cause of thatch because it discourages deep root growth.
- Core aeration in the spring and fall will prevent thatch build-up by allowing moisture and nutrients to penetrate to the roots. Care is needed when de-thatching; check with your local lawn professional.

## Helpful insects

Many insects are beneficial to your garden. Avoid using chemical insecticides, and ladybugs, lacewings, minute pirate bugs, damsel bugs etc., will be abundant in your garden and you will find them eating harmful insects.

## Where to take excess yard and garden waste for disposal

If you have excess yard and garden waste or bag your lawn clippings, you can dispose of them at the following locations (fees apply):

### Regional Landfill

1105 Cedar Road, Nanaimo, (250) 722-2044

### Church Road Transfer Station

860 Church Road, Parksville (250) 248-5254

### Nanaimo Recycling Exchange

2477 Kenworth Road, Nanaimo (250) 758-7777

- 1 garlic bulb
- 1 small onion
- 1 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1 qt water
- 1 tsp. liquid hand soap

Chop or grind garlic and onion, add cayenne and mix with water. Let steep about an hour, then add liquid soap. Pour into a spray bottle and spray only affected areas. The mixture will keep in the fridge for about a week.

(From Natural Formula Book for Home and Yard, Rodale Press, 1982)

*It is a good idea to test this mixture on a small part of the plant. You don't want it turning your daisies brown!*

*All purpose  
insect repellent  
for plants*