

## **TRY A HEALTHIER LAWN THIS YEAR**

A ½ acre lawn in Pennsylvania produces more than three tons, nearly 260 bags, of grass clippings a year. It takes time, money, and effort to bag those clippings. However, bagging grass is not necessary. You can have a green, healthy lawn by leaving grass clippings where they fall. The clippings will decompose and act as a fertilizer. Each time you mow, you return nutrients to the soil, reducing the need to buy fertilizer. Recycling clippings back into the lawn is less work than disposing of them. No one has to handle the clippings and you can reduce your mowing time by nearly 40% and spend less money on fertilizer and trash bags. By reducing waste, you'll be doing your part for the environment.



Any mower can recycle grass clippings. Simply remove the grass catcher. Be sure you check with your lawn mower dealer if you need a special safety plug or adapter kit. Installing a mulching blade also is helpful. Never cut off more than 1/3 of the grass blade in one mowing. Keep grass mowed to 2" in early spring, gradually raise the height to 3" to 4" by summer, and then gradually reduce to 2" by late fall. Mow when the grass is dry. Keep your mower blade sharpened. Dull mowers tear the grass blade, injure the plant and cause the turf to take on a brownish cast. If the grass gets too high, mow over the clippings a second time to further shred and scatter them. To prevent excess growth between mows, raise the mower height, mow, and then gradually lower it over a span of several mows. This will help prevent shock to the plants. When it is time to replace your mower, consider a mulching, recycling, or nonpolluting reel mower. All of them do a good job of shredding and scattering grass clippings. Remember, it's not necessary to water grass. Healthy lawns go brown during a drought, but quickly turn green when rainfall resumes.