

## **Tips for a better, more environmentally friendly lawn!**

1. **Set your lawn mower blade to its highest setting.** A high cut (3") encourages deeper roots. Increasing the grass height only 1/8 of an inch results in about 300 square feet more leaf surface for each 1,000 square feet of lawn. More leaf surface enables grass to generate more energy for healthy growth, especially of roots. Taller grass shades out weeds, limits moisture evaporation from soil and harbors beneficial insects which control pests. Cut the lawn often enough so that you remove no more than 1/3 of the blade at one time. This means more frequent mowings in the spring, fewer in the heat of summer.
2. **Leave your grass clippings as you mow.** Clippings provide nutrition for your lawn. They are comprised of water, organic matter, nitrogen, and a small amount of phosphorus--all things your grass needs. Because clippings supply up to 50% of a lawn's nitrogen needs over the season, you will not need as much fertilizer. Clippings from regular mowings will NOT cause thatch build up and will not hurt the grass.
3. **Do not dump yard waste** (clippings, branches, or leaves) in the street where it can wash into storm drains, or in parks, along streams, or piled at the base of trees.

Sources: Penn State Cooperative Extension; compiled by Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association.