

Lawn Mowing Tips and Strategies

With the coming of spring, everyone wants to be out in their yards doing all sorts of yard work, including the mowing and trimming of the lawn. At the Champaign Township Road District, we offer a free drop-off of yard waste, not including lawn clippings. Properly bagged (paper bags, available at many different stores in town) are welcome to be dropped off, and may include: twigs, branches, the dead stalks of flowers, etc.

However, putting your yard waste, including lawn clippings, into the street is strictly forbidden by state law, 415 ILCS 105. Putting yard waste deliberately on the street is a hazard, first for motorists (wet leaves and grass clippings are very slippery), and for the storm drains. It is very easy to clog the drains and a clogged drain results in street flooding, a hazard for everyone. The statute makes leaving lawn waste onto a roadway a Class B misdemeanor with a \$1,500 fine.

To avoid this problem, experts make the following suggestions:

- 1) Mow your yard on a regular basis so that the grass does not get too long. A length of about 2.5 to 4 inches is recommended. The grass will keep weeds out of the lawn and shade the ground. This length also retards water loss between periods of rain.
- 2) When mowing, cut about 1/3 of the length of the grass. If the grass is 3 inches high, then only about 1 inch comes off. Again, the longer grass is beneficial all around (and looks better, too!)
- 3) Use the mulching feature of your lawn mower. If you are using fertilizers to help your lawn look good, mulching the grass will return some of the fertilizer to the soil and help curb the need for more fertilizer, thus reducing your costs.
- 4) Water your lawn sparingly, but deeply. Watering once every two weeks and putting about 1 inch of water on the lawn helps the roots grow better than watering every other day with only 1/4 of an inch of water. Also, let Mother Nature help you out and don't water when it's raining.

Use these few tips and you'll see a nice, green lawn for most of the summer.

If you use a lawn service, please inform them about putting the grass clippings on the street. Neither you nor they need to be sideways of the law.

If you have any questions, consult your lawn experts.