

Grasscycling

By Jacquelyn Buck

Allen County Partnership for Water Quality (ACPWQ) is encouraging homeowners to take a step out of their lawn care regiment and stop bagging grass clippings. When grass clippings from yards are removed, lawns lose nutrients, ensuring the need for future fertilizers. This cycle is one many have fallen into, and ACPWQ thinks it is time to break the mold! Each year the average homeowner will spend approximately [70 hours](#) maintaining their lawns to achieve their ideal space. One step that can reduce both the time and money spent maintaining the perfect yard is through grasscycling.

Grasscycling, or leaving grass clippings on the lawn, can provide up to [25% of nutrient](#) needs for a lawn. Instead of raking, bagging, and throwing away clippings, let them stay where they fall, reducing fertilizer application in the future. This practice can [reduce mowing time by up to 40%](#), allowing for this chore to pass by quickly.

The ideal conditions for grasscycling are to mow when the grass is dry to the touch and with a sharp blade to ensure that the grass isn't being torn. Additionally, try to cut off no more than [1/3 the length of the grass](#). The smaller pieces will biodegrade faster and help keep your lawn looking healthy. If poor weather or life events make it difficult to cut the grass at the ideal length, be sure to mow over the clippings to help disperse them and chop them into finer pieces.

Grasscycling is a great way to improve our local water quality by allowing fewer fertilizers to be used, and therefore less opportunity for excess nitrogen and phosphorus to find their way to our waterways. Additionally, this process helps promote healthy soil that is better equipped to absorb rainwater, which allows us to water our lawns less frequently.

So why wait to gain more free time back in your summer and start grasscycling to improve the water quality in your area!