



Join us in keeping water clean!  
Together we can make a difference!  
Protect it. Pass it on.



#### ABOUT US

The MWMo is a public organization that partners to protect and improve water and habitat in an urban setting. We invest in people and infrastructure to support clean water, and provide knowledge, scientific data and expertise to help manage our vital water resources.

#### FIND US

##### Mississippi Watershed Management Organization

2522 Marshall Street NE, Minneapolis, MN 55418-3329

612-465-8780 / [mwmo.org](http://mwmo.org)

#### CONNECT WITH US



## Green Lawns, Clean Water

Simple lawn care tips to keep your yard healthy  
and prevent polluted runoff.



#### FROM YOUR YARD TO THE RIVER

*Your lawn can either be a source of water  
pollution or a buffer to protect against it.*

**DID YOU KNOW** that poor lawn care practices create pollution in our waterways? Grass clippings, leaves, fertilizer and other pollutants can wash into the streets, through the stormdrains and into nearby water bodies.

### MOW HIGH — 3 INCHES OR HIGHER

Don't cut your grass too short. Setting your lawn mower at a height of three inches or greater will produce denser, healthier grass that is more resistant to weeds, drought and erosion. It will also help trap pollutants that would otherwise blow into stormdrains.

### CUT ONE-THIRD (OR LESS) AT A TIME

At any given time, don't cut more than one-third of the length of the grass blade. Doing so will stress your lawn and make it difficult to re-grow. It will also leave unsightly piles of grass clippings that can blow into stormdrains and pollute nearby waterbodies.

### KEEP YOUR MOWER BLADES SHARP

Dull lawn mower blades can damage grass tips and give lawns a yellowish or whitish appearance. Keep your mower blades sharp to keep your lawn healthy and help your mower run more efficiently. Most hardware stores can sharpen mower blades for a small fee.

### WATER WISELY

Early morning watering is best, so the grass can retain the moisture better. Lawns generally require one inch of water per week, so use a rain gauge to determine how much (if any) extra water your lawn needs between rainfalls. Also, avoid sprinkling hard surfaces.

### MULCH OR COMPOST YOUR YARD WASTE

Mulch your grass clippings and leave them on your lawn; it's the same as applying a round of fertilizer. You can also mulch leaves and leave them on your lawn as long as it doesn't cover up more than 50 percent of the grass. You can put excess mulch in a compost bin.

### FERTILIZE SMART

If you choose to use fertilizer, do it in the fall when it's most effective. Apply the amount directed, and use only zero-phosphorus fertilizers. Sweep up any excess that falls on hard surfaces. Also, consider aerating your yard in the fall; it will strengthen your lawn naturally.



#### STORMDRAINS AND WATER POLLUTION

The stormdrains in your street connect directly to the Mississippi River and other waterbodies. Grass clippings, leaves and other yard trimmings pollute water with phosphorus, nitrogen and other excess nutrients.

### BEAUTIFY YOUR YARD AND STOP POLLUTED RUNOFF

- Pick up your pet's waste to prevent lawn burns and keep bacteria out of stormdrains
- Replace your turfgrass with native perennial plants
- Install a raingarden to capture and absorb stormwater runoff
- Wash your vehicles at a commercial car wash — not in your driveway
- Install a rainbarrel to capture stormwater for irrigation
- Point your downspouts away from hard surfaces