

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE BY THE SP GREEN TEAM**

**May 8, 2017**

### **GRASS RECYCLING – CUT IT & LEAVE IT!**

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April showers bring May flowers....and grass to cut. The Middlesex County Improvement Authority's Recycling Division has launched its annual "grasscycling" campaign in sync with the region's mowing season.

Lawn experts at Rutgers University and other research centers have found that short grass clippings left on your lawn act as a natural fertilizer, producing a healthier lawn that greens up earlier in the spring and stays green later into the fall. The research also found the grass clippings shelter the tender grass roots from the sun and conserve moisture, help to create a thicker, healthier lawn that is more resistant to weeds & certain lawn diseases. "Grasscycling" DOES NOT cause thatch. Short clippings decompose within a few days.

Grasscycling saves your time. Experts say we spend as much as 35% of our mowing time getting rid of the clippings: emptying the mower bag, raking, filling the lawn waste bags and bringing them to our compost yard. Grasscycling also decreases the need to fertilize your lawn thus saving you money. By grasscycling you only need to fertilize once or twice per year.

If you have no other choice but to bag the clippings, you can use them as mulch around plants and in your garden to reduce weed growth or add them to your compost pile. These tips and other tips can be found at the Middlesex County Improvement Authority's website at [www.mciauth.com](http://www.mciauth.com) or by calling 1-800-488-MCIA.

There is no excuse for sweeping grass and/or leaves into the storm drains or waterways. Stormwater runoff from lawn maintenance is a contributor to water pollution. It can harm bodies of water by increasing the levels of sediment & suspended solids, which lower the oxygen levels in water bodies creating poor water quality. Just blowing grass clippings out into the street has the same result, since they will wash into the storm drains in the next heavy rain. It hurts the water quality in our streams and it is illegal.

Lastly, with all the rain that normally occurs during Spring, the mosquitoes will be out in full force. The NJ Departments of Health and Environmental Protection Agency are asking homeowners, businesses and contractors working on rebuilding to drain sources of water outdoors and routinely check their property for containers collecting water where mosquitoes can breed. For more information on NJ's efforts to reduce the mosquito population, log onto the Department of Health's webpage at <http://nj.gov/health/cd/westnile/index.shtml> or the Department of Environmental Protection's website at <http://nj.gov/dep/mosquito>.

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