

WHAT'S GREEN?

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Vol. 1

The Westville Environmental Commission's Way

Spring 2008

GREEN LAWNS



With Spring almost here, many of you will be thinking of the beautiful, lush green lawns you are hoping to have. But before you rush out to buy your fertilizers and pesticides, take a minute to consider these environmentally friendly lawn care facts:

* Planting the appropriate grass for our area will make it much easier to maintain a beautiful lawn. Cool Season Tall Fescues, Rye and Zoysia grasses do best in our climate. Kentucky Blue Grass is **NOT** suited to our area and is **VERY** high maintenance.

* If you fertilize, do it in the Fall when grass slows down its foliage growth and directs the nutrients into its root systems. Buy an organic fertilizer with a 5-5-5 ratio. Even better, apply a light layer of compost to your yard, about 1" per year, and eliminate fertilizing altogether.

* Another option would be to start a compost pile with your grass clippings. Compost, or "brown gold", is your garden's best friend. A combination of dried leaves, grass clippings and kitchen vegetable scraps will get you started. Find guidance at www.compostguide.com.

* Pesticides and insecticides are poisons. They are a risk to human, pet and wildlife health. You would never consider applying them to your body, so why would you apply them to the earth? There are many environmentally safe ways to effectively deal with plant diseases and insects. The Gloucester County Master Gardeners maintain a "Garden Helpline" 856-307-6464 or MasterG@co.gloucester.nj.us

* Improper watering creates many lawn problems. Do **NOT** water your grass every day. This is a tremendous waste of a precious natural resource and it creates weak root systems that cannot respond when there is a drought.

* When you mow, make sure the blades are sharp and keep the blades at least 3" high. Consider using an electric or self-powered mower. Gas-powered lawnmowers produce high amounts of greenhouse gases, which contribute to global warming and air pollution.

* Instead of bagging your grass clippings, leave them on the lawn. Grass is high in nitrogen and will be a big boost to the soil. Clippings also conserve water by shading the soil and reducing the moisture loss in your soil.

* Reducing the use of chemicals, conserving energy and water and composting are all ways to help improve the air, water and soil quality for us all.

* And lastly, why not consider an alternative to the traditional lawn? Replacing grass lawns with native wildflowers, shrubs, and trees will increase the beauty of your property and provide food and habitat for wildlife.

Environmental Commissioners are:

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J. Fred Coleman 456-1489
Virginia Horn 456-8019
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Meetings are open to the public at 7:00 p.m. on the first Wed. of Jan. – June and Sept.-Dec.



EARTH DAY VOLUNTEERS!

Help needed for Earth Day Clean-up on Sat. April 19 from 8:30 am until ? Noon. Breakfast provided. Call Joyce Lovell to sign up.

ENJOY LOOKING AT THIS....



Not This..



All of this debris was removed from Big Timber Creek at 303 Edgewater Ave. March 9, 2008.

GREEN CREEK PACT

Creek Side Home Owners pledge to take items you can reach from your property out of the Creek for recycling or Monday morning pick up at the curb and to not put things into the creek. Grass clippings, weeds, and tree branches create islands of debris onto which items of trash cling and travel.

I _____
Your Name

Pledge to be a Green Creek Pact member for my home at

Your Address

Signed by:

Your Signature

Send your pledge to Louanna Sills, WEC, 303 Edgewater Avenue Westville, NJ 08093 to be included in the Pact Graphic on line.