

**For a healthy, beautiful yard  
with minimum effects on water quality,  
consider these ideas:**



**Proper mowing at 3-4 inches high (or the highest setting on your mower) results in 80% fewer weeds and thicker turf that doesn't require chemical inputs.** Mowing height is one of the biggest factors in creating a healthy lawn. When grass is cut tall, it conserves moisture and minimizes weed seed germination.

**Consider having a "good enough" lawn...** when making lawn care decisions. It doesn't have to look perfect to be healthy and meet the needs of your family.



**Use mole traps or borrow a good dog for mole control.** Using insecticide for grubs is totally ineffective for mole control.

**Don't bag your grass clippings.** They can contribute much of the nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium your lawn needs.

**Clover is your yard's friend!** Instead of treating to prevent it, think of clover as free fertilizer. **Clover takes nitrogen** from the air and feeds your soil! It can provide up to 30% of a lawn's yearly nitrogen requirement.



## Did you know....

- A watershed-friendly lawn care demonstration site is located at Hickem Cabin in Rock Bridge State Park (upper parking lot).
- Shelter Gardens uses environmentally friendly lawn care practices on its turf and gardens.
- Even the White House lawn is "going green." Staff there are using gardening and landscaping practices designed to protect the environment and minimize polluted runoff.
- Some golf courses are changing their approach to stormwater. MU's A.L. Gustin golf course has been certified by Audubon International as watershed-friendly for their efforts to improve water quality, use native plants and reduce chemical use.

### Why Have a Show-Me Yard?

Show-Me Yards and Neighborhoods is an educational effort to inform landowners & businesses about ways they can be more environmentally responsible with their lawn and landscape practices. A Show-Me Yard can help protect Missouri's lakes and rivers for future generations.

### What Does My Yard Have to do With Healthy Streams?

- If lawns were classified as a crop, it would rank as the fifth-largest in the country, based on area.
- Homeowners use ten times more chemicals per acre than farmers.
- 67,000,000 lbs. of synthetic pesticides are used on U.S. lawns.
- 30-60% of urban fresh water is used for watering lawns.\*

\*Source: Borman et al. *Redesigning the American Lawn*, Yale University Press, 2001.



## Green Lawns / Blue Waters

### *Having Both the Smart Way*

The EPA now considers stormwater runoff from yards, streets, parking lots and other urban areas to be one of the most significant sources of contamination in our nation's waters.

Homeowners use more chemicals per acre on lawns than farmers use on crops. Some of these chemicals are finding their way to our streams.

All stormwater flows directly from gutters and storm drains straight to streams and is not treated in any way. This means our lawn and garden chemicals have the potential to cause fish kills and harm other living things.

## What does a Show-Me Yard Look Like?

A Show-Me Yard can take any form-unique or traditional. In fact, you can create a Show-Me Yard simply by changing the way you take care of your yard.

## In the meantime, consider these easy changes to how you care for your yard:

1. Mow high...typically 3 to 4 inches or highest setting.
2. Remember: storm drains lead straight to streams.
3. Clover is okay; it provides nitrogen to your lawn.
4. Increase the amount of your yard in tree cover.
5. Sharpen mower blade (at least once per summer)
6. Compost grass clippings and/or leaf litter at home.
7. Check streets & sidewalks after applying lawn products; sweep excess into lawn, not the street.
8. Include native plants. They tolerate drought and require no fertilizers or extra watering.
9. Mulch circles beneath trees and around beds.
10. Install a rain barrel ([www.rainbarrelguide.com](http://www.rainbarrelguide.com))
11. Install a rain garden ([www.raingardens.org](http://www.raingardens.org))
12. Clean up pet waste
13. Leave clippings on lawn. They provide nutrients.
14. Consider using corn gluten as a pre-emergent & fertilizer. Avoid misuse of weed & feed products.
15. Map and measure your yard to determine correct application amounts (one adult pace = about 3 feet).
16. Attend a Show-Me Yards workshop (Sept 2005)
17. Have a soil test done, then apply fertilizer per recommendations. Call Boone County Extension office at 445-9792 for details.
18. Use a rain gauge or small tin can to track rainfall and avoid unnecessary over-watering.
19. Reduce use of lawn chemicals and apply according to directions.
20. Identify weeds, diseases or insects before taking action. Contact Boone County Extension for assistance.
21. Overseed bare spots in early spring or early fall.



With a Show-Me Yard You Win...  
and so does Missouri's environment. You don't waste water, fertilizers or pesticides and Boone County's streams, lakes and wildlife are protected for generations to come.

*Show-Me Yards & Neighborhoods is a joint project. Partners include:*  
City of Columbia      University of Missouri Extension      Boone County  
Natural Resources Conservation Service      Mid-America Green Industry Council  
Hinkson Creek Watershed Restoration Project      Missouri Department of Natural Resources

The US EPA Region 7, through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, has provided partial funding for this project under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.

**For More Information  
or  
To become a Show-Me Yard,  
Email [scott.hamilton@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:scott.hamilton@mdc.mo.gov)  
or call 882-9909, Ext. 3257**

Register to attend a Spring or Fall workshop  
by email or phone (above)

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Hinkson Creek [www.helpthehinkson.org](http://www.helpthehinkson.org)  
Love Your Lawn [www.kentuckypride.com/weathermatters/lawn.htm](http://www.kentuckypride.com/weathermatters/lawn.htm)  
City of Columbia [www.gocolumbiamo.com](http://www.gocolumbiamo.com) (GoStormwater)  
U of Missouri <http://muextension.missouri.edu/explore/agguides/hort/#Lawns>  
<http://muextension.missouri.edu/explore/agguides/hort/index.htm>  
Florida Yards & Neighborhoods <http://hort.ufl.edu/fyn/>  
Carolina Yards & Neighborhoods [www.clemson.edu/cyn/nine.html](http://www.clemson.edu/cyn/nine.html)  
Natural Yard Care [www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/naturalyardcare/lawncare.asp](http://www.metrokc.gov/dnrp/swd/naturalyardcare/lawncare.asp)  
Grow Native! [www.grownative.org](http://www.grownative.org)  
Ask the Hotline...if you have lawn or garden questions, call the Boone County Extension Office at 573-445-9792