



Community Partners for Clean Streams Monthly eMonitor



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A Publication of the Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner's Office
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Up Front

Unsure how long your grass should be? Need a way to broach the subject with your lawn contractor? Community Partners for Clean Streams has just the solution. Now available to all partners is a six-inch ruler with corresponding mowing gauge. Determining whether your lawn meets CPCS standards could not be easier; the back of the ruler indicates the best mowing height for a lush lawn and clean environment. Partners should also feel free to pass the rulers onto their landscapers to get the message out about proper mowing standards.



Revisiting Springtime Lawn Care Routines

With springtime rolling on, this eMonitor is devoted to dealing with one issue: lawn care. Maintaining your outdoor landscapes in an environmentally friendly way doesn't have to be difficult. There are a few simple measures that Community Partners recommends to maintain your lawn without harming the environment. Not only do these suggestions minimize environmental damage, but in many cases, these steps can result in a healthier lawn and garden and lower maintenance costs.



Mowing your Lawn:

- ✿ Adjust your lawn mower so that the grass is 2.5 to 3.5 inches in height. This allows the turf to develop a thicker root system, holding down soil and securing your lawn.
- ✿ Leave clippings on the lawn. They actually serve to nourish and water your lawn as they decompose!



Watering your Lawn:

- ✿ Water in the morning before the heat evaporates all your water away.

- ✿ Many people water too often; only water when the lawn begins to wilt, fades, or any footprints stay compressed.
- ✿ A longer, less frequent watering will allow water to penetrate deeper, encouraging deeper roots. If possible, use water conserving systems like drip irrigation or soaker hoses.

Fertilizing your Lawn:

- ✿ Avoid fertilizing in the spring, fertilize in the fall if needed. Fall fertilizing promotes root growth—a deep root system will protect your lawn against droughts and harsh winters.
- ✿ **Test your soil for existing content and adjust your fertilizer to target your lawn's needs.** CPCS offers soil test kits. Call for further information.
- ✿ Minimize the use of phosphorus content in fertilizers. This is particularly damaging to our waterways; instead, use the long-root promoting techniques mentioned previously.
- ✿ If you care for your lawn areas yourself, buy only the fertilizer you need to prevent waste and possible spillage and cleanup costs.
- ✿ Save money by applying only the proper amount of fertilizer. Never exceed the application rates on the package—these are frequently higher than necessary anyway.



CPCS Welcomes New Intern



Community Partners is proud to announce the appointment of an environmental intern. Marisa London, a recent University of Michigan graduate, was hired as a new intern this June. Marisa joins us with a degree in environmental studies and a specialization in environmental economics. She has also served with other environmental organizations, including Public Interest Research Group in Washington, DC. Locally, Marisa has worked at the Ecology Center and the Neutral Zone, tutoring high school students. Please feel free to call or email her with any questions regarding our program. She is eager to put her broad

knowledge of the environment to work assisting our Community Partners. Please feel free to call or email her at (734)222-6813 or londonm@ewashtenaw.org.

Websites of the Month

Next month our issue will feature Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques and tips. Integrated Pest Management is a system of dealing with pests using cultural, mechanical, and biological controls. Pest population levels are kept low while minimizing the amount of pesticide that is applied. If you want to get a little background before next month, here are some great websites to check out:



University of Minnesota's IPM site: ipmworld.umn.edu
Northeastern IPM site: northeastipm.org
EPA's IPM website: www.epa.gov/pesticides/food/ipm.htm

CPCS Events

April 21- **Annual Washtenaw County Waste Knot Awards**, awards were presented to County businesses with the best waste management practices
July 10- **Annual Huron River Days**, CPCS will have an information booth from 12-5pm at Gallup Park in Ann Arbor. A special "enviro challenge" activity will be provided for kids.

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