

Lawns and leaves are falling into winter

Where the Grass is Greener:



Welcome to the Department of Environmental Protection's newsletter about organic lawns and lawn care. We're pausing our newsletter for the winter months and will restart in March.

For more green news, sign up for the [My Green Montgomery newsletter](#).

Lawn Care Tips



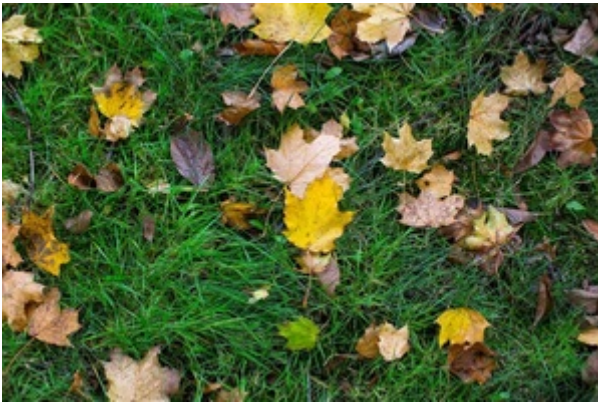
Dormant Lawn Seeding: Can I still improve my lawn for spring?

Overseeding your lawn is one of the best things you can do to prevent weeds and boost your lawn's health and appearance. Typically, 45 days before first frost is an ideal time to give young seedlings a chance to withstand freezing.



Putting seed down after fall "warmth" is over gives the seed a chance to move into the soil layers, and germinate naturally when ground temperatures and soil microorganisms are just right to aid in germination.

If you missed the pre-frost window to overseed your lawn, you still have a great opportunity this winter! Go ahead and purchase lawn seed now, and consider overseeding your lawn over the next few months. [Learn how to seed your dormant lawn.](#)



To leaf or to leave?

Leaves are everywhere, your yard trim compost bin is full, and now you're wondering what to do next.

Leaves are a great source of soil nutrients, so we recommend leaving as many as possible. But it's important that they don't smother your lawn.

Too many leaves can form a wet blanket that might smother the grass over winter. To prevent this, mow them into smaller pieces. This allows soil microorganisms to break them down faster and prevents smothering.

Mulch your leaves

A mulching mower is ideal for this job, as they are designed to chop leaves into small bits and drop them back on the ground.

If you don't have a mulching mower, you can just mow across the leaves several times until they are chopped up. Some people like to rake them into piles on the lawn or even driveway, mow over them to chop them (or even mow them into the lawn bag) and then spread them back across the lawn more evenly.

If you still have too many leaves, use them as a blanket on your vegetable garden to smother winter and spring weeds, or compost them, rather than sending them off for collection.

Shopping? Look around now for your new mower.

If you have a gas guzzling lawn mower, and are considering a more energy efficient model, now is a great time to hit the end-of-season sales! Be sure to check out our tips on choosing a mower [here](#).

Lessons from the Lawn



The surprising benefits of not mowing in August

Many lawns got quite long this summer as the constant rain interfered with mowing schedules. Due to this, I had to skip mowing my rural in August all together and watch the results.

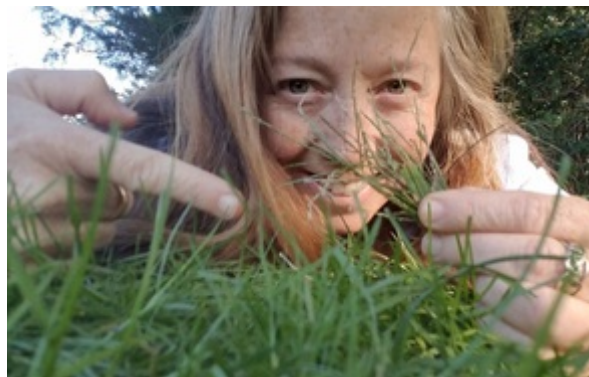
Along with less time spent mowing, a pleasant surprise was that my unmowed lawn got a chance to seed naturally!

All those fresh seeds were a boost to my grass after I mowed them back onto the lawn. I got fresh, light green grass growing in bare spots in September and October. The new grass even pushed out areas where stiltgrass had been dominating.

Talk about summer savings -- free seed from the overgrown grass, wet soils for the new seedlings, and a lusher lawn, all at no cost!

Mark your calendar next summer to try the same experiment on your lawn. We'll also send out this newsletter to you remind you too!

By Mary Travaglini, Program Manager



In the Community



Register your lawn as organic!



Do you have an organic lawn that you are proud of? **Enroll your Organic Lawn**, and inspire your neighbors!

We're looking for actively maintained lawns that are cared for without the use of synthetic fertilizers or pesticides. Your lawn can help demonstrate to your neighbors that a lush and beautiful green lawn can be achieved organically.

As a thank you for going organic, we'll mail you an optional lawn sign, certificate, and two pairs of gardening gloves – all for free!

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