

How do you mow your lawn?
What are the negative environmental impacts? Are there alternatives that reduce or eliminate these impacts?

Basic Facts

1. Larger mowers consume more fossil fuels.
2. Approximately 580 million gallons of gas are used each year for power mowers; especially riding mowers.
3. A study of air pollution in California found that mower emissions per year equaled that produced by 3,500,000 automobiles that had each drove 16,000 miles.
4. Noise pollution is a significant irritant for many people and has a negative impact on wildlife, particularly during their breeding season.
5. Regular mowing reduces wildlife habitat, destroys nesting wildlife, and eliminates food for pollinating insects that farmers and nature depend upon.



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Lawn Mowing



Find more Yard Smart
recommendations at
yardsmart.org

Alternatives to Standard Mowing

No-Mowing Option:

The method with the least environmental impact is to stop mowing altogether. Native landscaping (see YardSmart Native Plants pamphlet) offers this opportunity.

Mowing Options:

1. A reel mower (also called a push mower), powered manually, has the least impact. This assumes that your physical condition and lawn size are a good match. Some people convert most of their lawn to native landscaping, and leave a smaller part as an organic lawn to make this option work.
2. An electric mower that is powered by a rechargeable battery or a cord plugged into an outdoor socket is another alternative to the traditional power mower. These are easier to push than a reel mower, and the amount of electricity used is minimal.

Product Information

We do not endorse or receive proceeds from any particular companies, we do provide the following suggestions to explore for reel and electric mowers.

Reel Mowers:

Regular sharpening of the blade is important. Locally, one can have that done at:

- Sharpening Shop, 710 N. Lumber St., Bloomington (north section of Lumber). 309-820-8383.
- Farm and Fleet. 2201 West Market Street. Bloomington, IL 61705. 309-829-0018.
- The Ecology Action Center also has a blade sharpener available in our library. Stop by the Ecology Action Center to check out the blade sharpener free of charge.

Electric Mowers:

- Bully Co. Manufacturer and wholesale supplier. Lake Barrington, IL, 60010. 847-304-0900.

Mowing Safety Tips

According to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, there are a variety of ways to stay safe while mowing your lawn, whether or not you are utilizing a push mower, electric mower, or gas mower...

1. Keep lawn mowers in good working condition and service mowers promptly when problems arise.
2. Always ensure the motor is off before inspecting or repairing any equipment.
3. Never leave a running mower unattended— always turn it off before walking away.
4. Wear sturdy shoes, long pants, gloves, and other protective garments when mowing. **Never** wear open toe shoes when mowing.
5. Ensure children do not play near any lawn mowers, even if they are not in use.
6. Remove stones, sticks, or any debris from the path of the mower to prevent objects getting stuck in the blades or becoming projectiles.