

Due to recent changes in the City of Smithville's regulatory classification by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (Urbanized Area of 10K population) the City of Smithville is now required to begin strict enforcement of both local and state water quality regulations. Any incidents of illegal dumping of grass clippings or other yard waste in a drainage channel (including streets and street drains) will result in a citation to municipal court, and potential clean-up costs being assessed. Your cooperation in protecting our local water quality would be greatly appreciated.

MOWING SEASON TIPS

Now is the time we begin that annual ritual of outdoor primping and pruning to make our lawns and houses more pleasing to look at – with the added benefit of a safer and healthier area to live. The following tips offer advice on how to properly mow your yards to avoid improper disposal penalties and lessen the amount of work for you!

Tune up your Mower

- Change the oil, replace the air filter and spark plug for fuel efficiency
- Tighten any loose nuts or bolts and inspect for wear or damage to safety items.
- Replace or sharpen blade

Consider a mulching blade for your mower

- A mulching blade eliminates the need to dispose of your grass clippings
- Mulch provides vital nutrients for your grass, does NOT create thatch, instead it protects the thatch (exposed dead and live roots at the surface of the ground) from the sun and drying out

If you bag your grass clippings, consider a compost pile

- By placing your grass clippings in a compost pile or compost machine, you will create your own nutrient rich soil for planting beds
- Bagged grass clippings and yard waste are NOT a part of the regular trash service
- You can save on paying to have the yard waste hauled off and get nutrient rich soil by composting
- The only legal methods to dispose of bagged clippings is placing them in a compost pile, purchasing curbside yard waste stickers to have the bags removed by the trash disposal contractor or taking your yard waste to Missouri Organic located at 11660 N. Main, Kansas City, MO (816-513-1313).

If you discharge your grass clippings remember the following

- It is illegal to leave grass clippings in the street or sidewalk – it ultimately becomes sediment in our rivers, creeks and lakes. If you have grass clippings in the street or sidewalk when you finish mowing, be sure to blow, sweep or vacuum the clippings out of the street and sidewalk areas
- Mow the outside of your property with the discharge chute facing towards your house for the first two passes to eliminate throwing clippings upon your neighbor's lawn, the sidewalk or the street.

Mowing more frequently makes for a healthier lawn

- You should set the mower blade to cut no more than 1/3 of the total height to prevent shocking the grass or over-exposing the roots
- Maximum grass height in Smithville for residential houses is 7", taller than that height is a nuisance and is subject to tickets and fines. Setting your mower blade at 4" and mowing before your grass becomes a nuisance height will protect your lawn, your neighbors and your pocketbook.