

## Have You Considered Composting?

Composting is another great way to handle grass clippings—as well as other garden trimmings like leaves, weeds, flowers, fruits and vegetable peelings, and small twigs. Composting converts these materials into a useful soil conditioner for your garden. Backyard composting is easy and fun. It doesn't take much time or space, and it doesn't create odors. Call the Town of Apple Valley Public Services Department at (760) 240-7500 for a free backyard composting brochure.



Join the Master Composters!

The Mojave Desert and Mountain Recycling JPA has sponsored training of over 1200 Master Composters. If you are interested in training, please contact the JPA at 1-800-URECYCLE for information. Check out the website at [www.urecycle.org](http://www.urecycle.org).

**Don't Trash Your Grass!**  
*Leave It On The Lawn.*



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## Why Bag the Grass??

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*A Better Way of Life*

## After all, bagging the grass is a lot of work!

And the landfill is no place for grass clippings to end up! In fact, the Town of Apple Valley has been working to keep as much as possible out of the landfill in order to comply with State Law AB 939. This law requires all communities to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill by 50%.

Putting grass in the trash wastes landfill space and costs the Town (and rate payers) money. The Town must pay the County \$37 for each ton of waste dumped at the County's landfill.

During the spring and summer months, grass clippings make up a large portion of the trash, but there is a much better way to handle them. Mulch them!



### Now, Consider *Not* Bagging the Grass — Leave It On The Lawn!

Instead of bagging your clippings, just leave them on the lawn. They are 80% water and decompose quickly. Gone is the hassle of stopping every few minutes to empty the mower bag, or raking, or wrestling with expensive trash bags. Not bagging means less work for you, and less fertilizer and water needed for your lawn. You can reduce your mowing time by nearly 40% by not bagging, and you'll spend less money on fertilizers and trash bags. Best of all, leaving clippings on the lawn helps you maintain a vigorous, healthy lawn.

## According to Turf Experts . . .

### Grass Clippings Left on the Lawn . . .

- reduce water evaporation from the lawn.
- facilitate better growth by keeping the soil temperature cooler.
- recycle plant nutrients (the equivalent of one normal fertilizer application during one growing season).

### Here's How It Works...

Any mower can mulch grass clippings. Simply remove the grass catcher. Ask your lawn mower dealer if a special safety plug or adapter kit is needed to convert your mower into a "mulching" mower. You can also have a mulching blade installed.

Mow only when the grass is dry. This decreases clumping and allows clippings to filter down to the soil.

Mow your grass to a height appropriate for the type of grass you have. Avoid "scalping" your lawn.

Don't remove more than 1/3 of the grass blade in any single mowing. For example, if your lawn is kept at 2 inches tall, it should not be allowed to grow more than 3 inches before it is mowed again.

Keep your mower blade sharp, because dull mowers tear the grass blade, injuring the plant and creating a brownish color on the top of the turf.

If the grass gets just a bit too high, simply mow over the clippings a second time to further shred and scatter them.

If excessive growth occurs between mowing, raise the mower height, mow, then gradually lower it over a span of several mowings. This will help prevent shock to the plants.

Don't over-fertilize your lawn; more is *not* better! Research shows that most grasses require only modest levels of nitrogen for good color and controlled

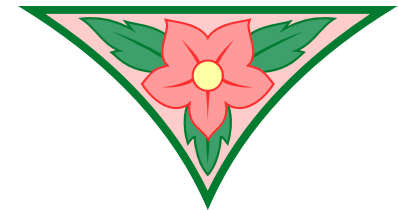
growth. Too much fertilizer just makes your lawn grow faster and results in more mowing! Consult gardening books or local professionals on the proper amount of fertilizer needed for your specific type of grass.

### This Is Not an All-or-Nothing Proposition

You may choose to collect your clippings every fourth or fifth time you mow. Or maybe you'll want to collect your grass clippings and use them to start a compost pile for your other garden trimmings. That's fine! The main idea is to keep grass out of the trash. This will help control disposal costs, save landfill space, and help the Town meet the 50% waste reduction goals of AB 939.

### What About Thatch?

Don't worry about grass clippings contributing to thatch problems. Turf experts nationwide agree that grass clippings do not produce thatch because they are 80% water and quickly decompose. Rather, thatch is the accumulation of dead roots and stems and is most often caused by over-fertilization and improper watering or allowing your grass to grow too long between mowings.



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