



# City of St. Louis

## Sustainable Yard Management Tips



Click on bold words for additional information.

### Practices

### The Issue

### Good

### Better

### Best

#### Water Use

40% of residential water use during the growing season is for lawns and landscaping.  
*Source: St. Louis Metropolitan Sewer District.*  
 Not running your sprinkler for an hour can save up to 600 gallons of water.  
*Source: Missouri Department of Natural Resources.*

Use an **irrigation system** that more efficiently uses water, such as a drip irrigation system.

**Water by hand**, avoid watering midday, and water according to weather and **local water needs**.

Use a **water harvesting method**, such as **rain barrels**, for irrigation. Use **drought tolerant native plants**.

#### Yard Waste Disposal

Throwing away yard waste with your trash takes up space in landfills and produces methane gas, contributing to climate change.  
*Source: EPA.*  
 Grass clippings left in place can return as much as 30% nitrogen and 50% potassium to the soil.  
*Source: University of Missouri Extension.*

Discard organic waste in the proper **disposal bins**.

Mulch leaves and leave **grass clippings** in place.

**Compost** grass clippings and weeds, as well as vegetative kitchen scraps, and use as mulch or soil amendment.

#### Plants, Shrubs & Trees

During 2012 and 2013, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources collected over 123,000 pounds of unwanted pesticide related wastes from residents.  
*Source: Missouri Department of Natural Resources*  
 Once established, native plants do not need to be watered, require few or no pesticide or fertilizer applications and provide wildlife habitat.  
*Source: EPA.*

Use **compost** in your yard instead of chemical fertilizers.

Grow **hardy native plants** to reduce the need for fertilizers and pesticides. Consider an **urban habitat restoration project**.

Identify causes when **pests** occur and target with choice remedies. Properly **dispose of pesticides** used. Keep trees watered during **droughts**.

#### Lawn Care

Using a lawnmower for one hour pollutes just as much as driving a car 20 miles.  
*Source: Missouri Department of Conservation.*  
 Mowing grass less frequently or at a taller height allows root systems to extend more deeply, increasing lawn resistance to insects, fungi, and weeds.  
*Source: University of Missouri Extension.*

Mow grass **higher** and less often to promote lawn health.

Use an electric or reel push **mower** to reduce pollution.

Plant a garden or **low-growing native groundcovers** to reduce mowing.

See sustainable practices in action at these City of St. Louis locations:

Brightside Demonstration Garden

Forest Park

Bell Demonstration and Community Garden

Missouri Botanical Garden

Citygarden