



Le développement durable :
Se prendre en main...
Aujourd'hui pour demain



Green file 1

ECOLOGICAL LAWN MAINTENANCE



BAN OF CHEMICAL PRODUCTS



12 ECOLOGICAL LAWN MAINTENANCE PRACTICES



SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING



Service de l'environnement

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NO CHEMICAL PRODUCTS



Saint-Lazare was one of the first cities in Québec to adopt a by-law banning the aesthetic use of pesticides. It is thus forbidden to use insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides on the territory at all times to avoid contamination of our soil, underground water and air.

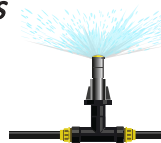
Ecological lawn maintenance is easy and ensures that plants grow healthy and strong while maintaining a healthy environment!



12 ECOLOGICAL LAWN MAINTENANCE PRACTICES

By adopting the following practices you will be creating an ecological lawn for a healthier environment.

1) REPLACE EXISTING LAWN WITH GROUND COVERS, MULCH, PATHWAYS, PERENNIALS AND PLANTING BEDS



2000 square foot lawn = 57 m³ of water per summer

Réseau environnement has estimated that during summer 75% of treated water by Quebec municipalities is used for watering lawn.

Replace you lawn by :

- Pathways
- Mulch
- Perennials
- Trees and shrub
- White clover
- Thyme
- Birdfoot trefoil
- Roman or English chamomile
- Yarrow
- Fine fescues (chewing, hard, creeping red), tall fescues, bluegrass (annual, Canada, Kentucky, rough), millet, ryegrass.

À titre d'exemple



You will save time and water.

2) BIODIVERSITY ABOVE ALL

A lawn constituted of a variety of plants is much more resistant to drought or heavy rain episodes.



Top dress your lawn with a variety of seeds (fescue, ryegrass, millet, bluegrass, etc.) for a diversified lawn, so it is more resistant to drought or diseases.

Except for grazing area, top dress with endophytic seed (microscopic fungi). They are especially useful as they are toxic to insects such as chinch bugs and sod webworms which feed on grass blades.

3) MOW HIGH

Short grass? Not recommended!

- Insects, such as scarab beetles (the adult phase of grubs), prefer to lay their eggs in short grass.
- Weeds establish more efficiently in short grass.



Longer grass to a height of at least 8 cm (3 in)

- It will allow the root system to develop deeper.
- The lawn will thus become more resistant to drought, insects, and weeds.

Remember, never mow your lawn during a dry spell.



4) LEAVE GRASS CLIPPINGS ON THE LAWN

- The clippings will decompose in a few days.
- It will be returning nitrogen to the soil.



Did you know?

- Mulching blade creates the smallest clippings.
- It is possible to get a financial aid for mulching blade: visit ville.saint-lazare.qc.ca/en/soutienresidents



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5) SPREAD COMPOST



Spreading compost is a key step in ecological lawn maintenance:

- increases microbial activity;
- helps the soil retain water;
- improves the soil's structure;
- adds important nutrients;
- helps reduce the amount of waste.

Spread your own compost during spring and fall. It is better and free.

6) APPLY NATURAL-BASED FERTILIZERS

Natural-based fertilizer: plant or animal origin



Chemical fertilizers: mineral origin or chemically synthesized



Advantages of using natural-based fertilizer:

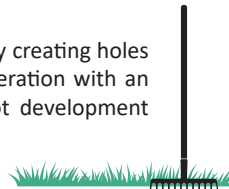
- Nutrients are released slowly.
- This helps curb nutrient leaching.
- It is reducing pollution to our ground water.

Spread natural-based fertilizer during spring and fall.

7) AERATE

Machines for aeration bring up plugs of earth thereby creating holes and breaking the root system of the lawn. Follow aeration with an application of compost. This action encourages root development and renders the lawn thicker and more vigorous.

Never aerate during a dry spell.



8) REMOVE THATCH



Thatch is the layer of dead grass roots found just above the soil. It is caused by a lack of microbial activity which would normally decompose the dead roots.

- Too much thatch can prevent the infiltration of water and nutrients into the soil.

Remove thatch if the layer is thicker than 1 cm. Avoid removing thatch in early spring when the lawn is still soaked and never remove thatch during a dry spell.

9) WATER LESS AND MORE EFFICIENTLY



On average, your lawn requires 2.5 cm (1 in) of water per week. Longer weekly watering will encourage the development of a deep root system thereby increasing your lawn's resistance to drought.

A yellow lawn will turn green again next time it rains.

10) ADJUST THE PH

In general, the soils in Saint-Lazare are acidic. You may want to gather a soil sample and bring it to a garden centre to be tested. To adjust the pH of an acidic soil simply spread some lime. A pH between 6 and 7 is best for the growth of grass.



11) MANUALLY REMOVE WEEDS

IMPORTANT: Weeds are plants that are harmful for health such as poison ivy which might cause rashes due to its irritating substance, or ragweed responsible for seasonal allergies or invasive alien species (EEE).

Other unwanted plants might seem unwelcome but contribute to the expected biodiversity. If you do not tolerate them, manually remove them. (See the green file concerning weeds)

IN SAINT-LAZARE, USE OF PESTICIDES IS FORBIDDEN!



12) INSPECT YOUR LAWN REGULARLY

A quick weekly inspection will allow you to single out potential problem and you will be able to apply the lawn ecological maintenance practice of this green file.

Remember that an ecological lawn cannot look like a conventional lawn. It is longer, has more plant diversity and more insects but it is safe to play on and more environmentally sustainable.



SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING

Good ecological lawn maintenance practices will minimize infestation and diseases of all kinds.

- Enjoy life;
- Allow nature to do its job by itself.

