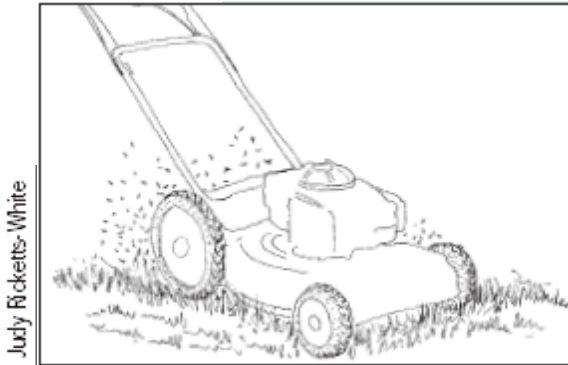


Conservation Landscaping for Water Quality – Composting



Conservation Landscaping promotes landscape management techniques and philosophies that work with nature to reduce pollution and encourage wildlife habitat. It encourages yard care practices that include using less fertilizers and pesticides, reducing lawn areas, and utilizing native plants. The results are less overall maintenance and less water use.

On-Site Organic Recycling

Most gardeners know the value of recycling their grass clippings, plant prunings and leaves by composting, but many people still buy commercial fertilizers because they don't have enough compost. Other people give their leaves away in the fall by taking advantage of municipal leaf pick-ups or paying landscaping companies to clean off their lawns because they think they have no room for a leaf compost pile. Then they pay for bags of bark mulch to spread under shrubs and trees and in garden beds. Instead, they could chop the leaves with a mulching mower and rake them into the landscaping beds to use as mulch. Natural forest ecosystems function this way. They were the first "organic gardeners", recycling their own leaves and fallen twigs or branches.

Another way to recycle organic matter, eliminate large compost piles and save yourself a lot of time is to create beds or areas in your landscape where materials can be recycled right where you are mowing or raking. Increasing the size and number of landscape beds helps decrease the size of the lawn (and the need to mow, rake, fertilize, or water). These beds can be planted with groundcovers that add landscape interest but still require less maintenance than grass or true gardens.

To learn more or report possible illegal discharges to the storm drain system, call the Village of Beecher at 708-946-2261.

(Source: Clean Water Fact Sheet, produced by NEMO and Sea Grant Connecticut)