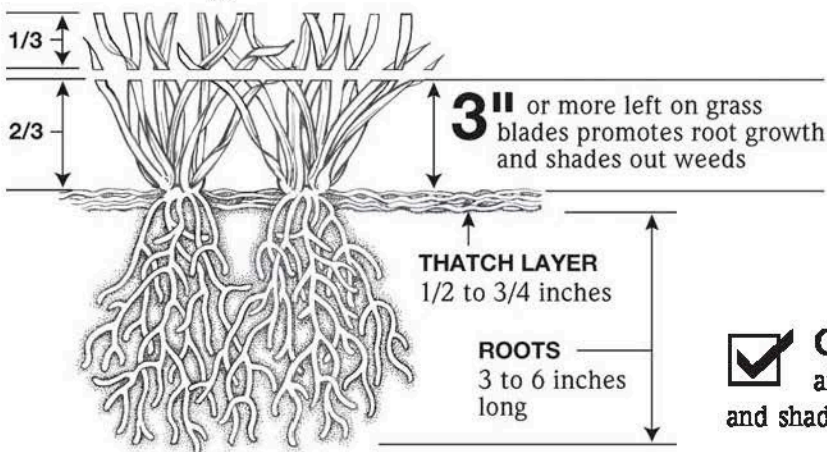


# Healthy Lawn CARE TIPS

SOCWA, Southeastern Oakland County Water Authority 3910 W. Webster Road, Royal Oak, MI 48073-2761, 248-288-5150

## Cut It High...Let It Lie!



### For further information...

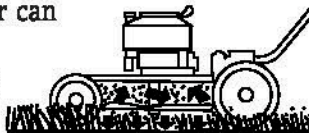
SOCWA Healthy Lawn Care Information  
[www.socwa.org/lawns\\_gardens.shtml](http://www.socwa.org/lawns_gardens.shtml)

MSU Turfgrass Science  
[www.turf.msu.edu](http://www.turf.msu.edu)

Oakland County Plant and Pest Hotline  
 248-858-0902

## Healthy Lawn Checklist

**Mulch Your Grass Clippings.** Let short clips fall back on the lawn. Clippings are a source of nitrogen, so fertilizer can be reduced by 25% or more. Clippings do not cause thatch!



**Test Soil for Nutrients & Organic Matter Content.** Michigan State University offers a soil test kit as a self-mailer for \$25.00. Customers purchase the box, send the sample via mail to the MSU soil test lab, and receive results via e-mail. The customer then references an MSU website to obtain specific fertilizer recommendations. The self-mailer soil test kit is available from the MSU bookstore ([www.bookstore.msue.msu.edu](http://www.bookstore.msue.msu.edu)) or through Oakland County MSU Extension (248-858-0902).

**Build Soil Organic Matter – to 5% or More.** Healthy soil has 5% or more organic matter. The organic matter provides a natural reservoir of nutrients and holds water. To assess your soil, test for basic nutrients and organic matter every one to three years.

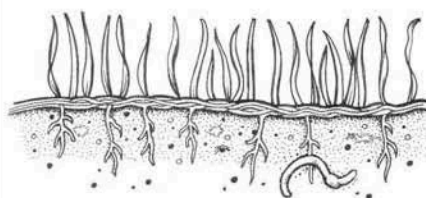
**Cut High.** Leave 3 inches on the grass blade after cutting. Tall grass promotes root growth and shades out weeds.

**Aerate Compacted Soil.** Use a core aerator to remove finger-like plugs of grass and soil – or hire a landscape service. Aeration improves drainage and allows water and oxygen to reach the grass roots.

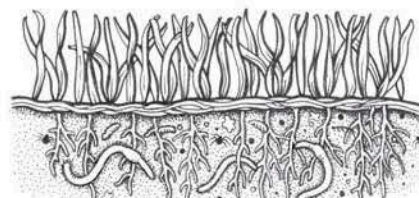
**Rake Compost Into the Lawn.** Rake 1/2 inch of compost into an established lawn. Leave half of the grass blade exposed to sunlight and air. Compost adds microorganisms, nutrients and organic matter, helping to build soil fertility.

**Water the Lawn to Minimize Stress.** A green lawn in Michigan needs .5 to 1.5 inches of water per week. Don't soak your lawn; watering should not produce puddles. Light, frequent watering which reaches the grass roots is recommended by Michigan State University. Lawn dormancy is a natural response to drought. However, some water may be necessary during an extended drought of more than a month.

### HEALTHY SOIL HAS HIGH ORGANIC MATTER CONTENT



LOW ORGANIC MATTER



HIGH ORGANIC MATTER