

The sites are open for public viewing. For further information about the program you may call one of the extension centers listed below.

**New London County Cooperative Extension**

562 New London Turnpike  
Norwich, CT 06360  
(860) 887-1608

**Tolland County Cooperative Extension**

24 Hyde Avenue  
Vernon, CT 06066  
(860) 875-3331

**Windham County Cooperative Extension**

139 Wolf Den Road  
Brooklyn, CT 06234  
(860) 774-9600



UConn Turfgrass Science

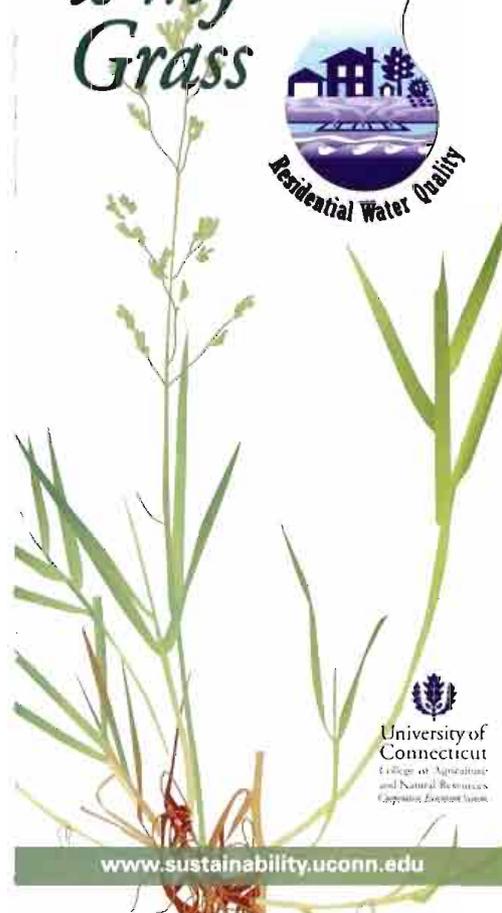


University of  
Connecticut

College of Agriculture  
and Natural Resources  
*Cooperative Extension System*

This material is based upon work in part by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under Agreement No. DD-51130-8775. Any opinion, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

# How Green is my Grass



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[www.sustainability.uconn.edu](http://www.sustainability.uconn.edu)

# Lawn Nutrient Management

The University of Connecticut's Cooperative Extension System under the auspices of Residential Water Quality program and in conjunction with the Department of Plant Science Turfgrass program and the Master Gardener Program is conducting a residential water quality study utilizing lawn nutrient management. Several different methods are being employed to determine ways to maintain turf quality and persistence in the most economical and environmentally benign manner. Initially, these studies are being conducted at three sites: The New London County Cooperative Extension Center in Norwich, the Windham County Cooperative Extension Center in Brooklyn, and the Tolland County Cooperative Extension in Vernon.

The Norwich site will test the timing and quantity of nitrogen applications and its impact on turf quality; as well as a demonstration plot displaying different turf types and the effects of varying amounts of nitrogen and each type.

The Brooklyn site will display more sustainable turf types. It will also monitor the effects of varying nitrogen applications on each type.

The Vernon location will duplicate the study conducted in Norwich.

## Color response to varying rates of nitrogen



All three locations will be monitored using two methods of testing turf nitrogen availability. Anion Exchange Membranes (AEM) and chlorophyll reflectance meters. AEMs are strips of vinyl fabric used in water treatment plants to filter out nitrates. They will be used to measure the amount of nitrogen moving with water through the soil. The reflectance meter measures the quantity of chlorophyll by measuring the greenness of the grass.

### What type of grass should I plant?

This depends on several factors: quality of soil, moisture holding capacity, and commitment to maintenance. In general we suggest the use of blends of the turf type tall fescues or the fine leaf fescues.

### How much lime should I use?

The only way to know how much is needed is with a soil test. Test information can be obtained at any of the extension centers or the UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory at (860) 486-4274.

### What type of fertilizer should I use and how often?

There are two general categories of turf type fertilizers: fast and slow release. We recommend slow release. The amount and frequency of fertilizer application will be based on the type of species present and whether or not clippings are returned or removed. Leaving the clippings can reduce fertilizer use by as much as 50%.

With slow release fertilizer and clippings returned two applications per year are usually sufficient.

### Should grass clippings be removed?

If mowed on a regular basis so there are no large clumps of grass, the remaining clippings will return nitrogen, potassium, and phosphorus to the soil.

### Will clippings add to thatch build up?

Not if lawn is mowed on a regular basis so that clippings do not clump up on the lawn. The clippings will break down in three to four weeks adding nutrients to the soil.

### How much should I water my lawn?

A lawn needs one inch of water per week. If irrigation is needed due to lack of rain, then heavy, infrequent applications are best which will encourage root growth.

### How high should I cut the grass?

Grass should be cut between one-and-one half to three inches for water retention and weed control. The higher the cut the greater the root depth.

### What do I do with fertilizers or pesticides left on the driveway or walkway?

Leaving fertilizers and pesticides on impervious surfaces increases the likelihood that these materials will run off when rain or irrigation water hits the surface. This threatens the water quality of receiving waters.

