



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LAWNS OFFER GOOD NEWS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

HERNDON, Va., March 27, 2006 --Taking care of the lawn is not just about property investment or neighborhood curb appeal. The good news is that the natural green carpet surrounding homes and businesses benefits the environment.

The U.S. Congress noted the benefits of grass and other vegetation in a 1990 Farm Bill: "...low growing dense perennial turfgrass sod in urban areas and communities, can aid in reducing carbon dioxide emissions, mitigating the heat island effect, and reducing energy consumption, thus contributing to efforts to reduce global warming trends."

To reap its many benefits, a lawn must be well maintained. The Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) recommends following these basic tips to enhance the lawn's environmental benefits:

- **Soil Sampling.** Consider having your soil sampled and analyzed. Make sure your soil has the correct pH level and key nutrients for healthy growth.
- **Grass Selection.** Only use new and improved variety mixtures or blends that grow well in your climate, meet your quality expectations and can accommodate your lawn activities, such as heavy use by children at play.
- **Mowing.** Mow at the highest recommended height and mow often, never removing more than one-third of the leaf surface. Keep lawn mower blades sharp and grasscycle. Grasscycling, or leaving clippings on the lawn when you mow, allows nutrients to return to the soil.
- **Watering.** Water deeply but not too often. In general, watering should moisten the soil to a depth of 4 to 6 inches. Too much water can cause water quality and grass problems, increasing the chance of fungus, or runoff and leaching of nutrients. And, it's a waste of our precious water resources.
- **Fertilization and Pest Control.** Apply the right amount and kind of fertilizer and pest control products at the right time, and only when needed. Follow all label instructions and precautions.

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To help with maintenance needs, consider hiring a professional lawn care service. Many homeowners do—more than 104 million households hired a green professional and spent more than \$11 billion, according to a 2004 Harris Survey. Make sure the service is a member of a professional association like PLANET, and check the company's service record through the local Better Business Bureau.

PLANET represents approximately 4,400 green industry service provider companies and suppliers nationwide that specialize in design/build/installation, interior plantscaping, landscape management, and lawn care. These firms and their employees represent more than 100,000 green industry professionals. For more information or to find a lawn care or landscape professional in your region, call PLANET at (800) 395-2522 or visit *landcarenetwork.org*.

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