



# Natural Lawn Care

*A lawn can make your yard look good and create a place to play and relax. Save money and time, and reduce your environmental impact by following these easy steps to a strong and healthy lawn.*

## 1 Aerate

Improve the health of your soil by aerating yearly and top dressing with organic material such as a compost mulch. This will replenish lost nutrients and improve your soil's ability to retain water.

## 2 Mow High

Leave grass 7½ cm tall (about a finger length) and never mow more than the top ⅓ of the grass blade. Not only does this shade the roots and help prevent moisture evaporation, but it helps your grass grow deep and strong roots that can overpower weeds and retain water.

## 3 Mulch Mow

Save time! Leave your grass clippings on the lawn. They will disappear in a day or two. Grass clippings are about 85% water and contain enough nitrogen to equal one fertilizer application.

## 4 Water Deeply

Place 3–5 soup cans at different distances from your sprinkler. Time how long it takes to collect an average of 2½ cm of water in the soup cans. Water for this length of time once per week in the summer. Reduce the running time by half in the spring and fall. Watering deeply trains roots to seek water hidden deep in the soil. Your grass will be better able to survive extended dry periods.

## 5 Plant Drought Tolerant Grass

Consider planting drought tolerant native grasses or ground cover. Okanagan native grasses include the Sheep Fescue, Perennial Ryegrass, and Bluebunch Wheatgrass.

*For more information, see the **Natural Lawn Care** brochure available inside the Okanagan Science Centre.*

