



8824 Eastern Ave, Byron Center MI 49315 [www.WeedandFeedLawnCare.com](http://www.WeedandFeedLawnCare.com)

**Steve VanNoord**  
**Matthew VanNoord**  
**616-698-8930**  
**Fax: 616-554-3646**

## Six Simple Steps to a Better Lawn



### 1. Mowing Height

Turf researchers have identified the ideal cutting height for grasses in West Michigan at 3 to 3.5 inches. Mowing below 3 inches can cause increased stress to your turf and also encourages diseases, weeds, and crabgrass.

### 2. Mowing Frequency

The frequency of mowing depends on the rate at which your lawn grows, but a rule of thumb is as follows: "The lawn should be mowed so that no more than 1/3 of the grass blade is removed at one mowing." In West Michigan that usually amounts to mowing your grass once every 5-7 days.

### 3. Returning Clippings

Grass clips shouldn't be bagged. Instead the clippings should be left on the lawn, because their nutrients are valuable to the turf. Clippings usually contain up to 4% nitrogen, 2% potassium, around .5% phosphorous, as well as small amounts of other essential nutrients. Returning the clippings also saves you time, money, and labor involved in caring for your lawn. Studies show that homeowners who return their clippings spend 38% less time mowing their lawn and don't have to purchase and handle all those bags. Today, mulching mowers do a great job of grinding clippings into very small pieces and making nutrients easy for grass plants to absorb.



### 4. Water, Water, Water

Watering is a vital activity for those who desire a

high quality lawn. The amount of water a lawn needs depends on soil type, lawn density, thatch, temperature, and wind. These factors make it impossible to have a set measure for watering amounts, however, generally speaking, lawns need .5 to 1.5 inches of water per week; from either rainfall or irrigation. More water is necessary during hot times in the summer and less during cooler times in the spring and fall.

### 5. Sharpen your Mower Blade

A dull, bent blade can make even the most beautiful lawn look bad. Sharpening your lawn mower blade is inexpensive and has a tremendous impact on the quality of your turf. Dull blades don't cut grass; they tear it. This tearing action leaves white fibers hanging from the ends of some grass blades and gives the lawn a grayish appearance.

### 6. Mulching Leaves

The days of raking and bagging leaves should be over for almost everyone. Studies have shown that homeowners have successfully mulched more than 6 inches of leaves back into their lawn. Mulching dry leaves will chop them into very small pieces; often mulching them into almost a dust. From a distance or after a heavy rain, you'll never know your leaves were mulched. Leaves, like grass clippings, are high in nutrients and organic matter and are good to return to the soil. There are a few keys to making mulching work; first, make sure your lawn mower blade is sharp. Without a sharp blade, mulching leaves will be a difficult process. Second, move your mowing height up to prevent your lawn mower from working too hard. Third, mulch your leaves when they are dry, wet leaves will turn into a paste rather than a dust.

