



Springfield-Greene County
Health Department
Helping people live longer, healthier, happier lives

Whack those Weeds Weekly

One of the early indicators of spring is the hum of the neighbor's lawnmower and the smell of freshly cut grass. But often by early summer, the thrill of having bright green grass is gone, and the desire to mow regularly has dwindled.

Instead of considering weekly mowing a chore, think of it as improving your health! By keeping your grass short, you can reduce insects, animals, and poisonous weeds in your yard AND get some exercise.

Tall grass and other vegetation can provide a home and food for rodents, mosquitoes, ticks, fleas, chiggers, snakes and other animals. Some of these pests are known to carry diseases that can be transferred to you, your family and your pets. If you eliminate their habitat and food by mowing your yard and right-of-ways, trimming fence lines and weed eating around structures, the pests will not stay in your yard. Remember to also remove brush and trash to keep weeds from growing.

Mowing at least once a week helps control noxious weeds like poison ivy and ragweed, and it keeps your grass healthy. It is easier and cheaper to mow often, rather than letting the grass get too tall. Mowing in the early evening is healthier for your lawn, and creates less of the harmful pollutant, ground-level ozone.

Springfield City Ordinances state that grass cannot grow more than 12 inches tall. When a grass exceeds this height, the property owner and/or occupant are notified to mow or otherwise take care of the problem. If things are not resolved in the time frame given, a court summons may be issued and the property may be mowed by the City at the property owner's expense.

Mowing can be hard work, but pushing a lawn mower is considered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to be a moderate-intensity aerobic activity. CDC recommends that adults get at least 2.5 hours of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week. Mowing once a week will help you reach that goal!

Take just one step today to reduce rodents, mosquitoes, ticks, fleas, chiggers, snakes and poison ivy in your yard, as well as get some great exercise – mow your yard.

For more information, contact the Springfield-Greene County Health Department at (417) 864-1658.