



Eco-Challenge Affiliates

O'Brien & Levine Court Reporting, Boston
 MassRecycle, Boston

Signature Signers

These offices agreed to sign the MBA Lawyers Environmental Pledge in its early stages.

Conservation Law Foundation, Boston	Law Office of David J. Dennis and Associates LLC, Fall River
Breakstone, White & Gluck PC, Boston	Law Office of Susan J. Crane, Sudbury
Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten LLP, Boston	Law Offices of Jeffrey S. Glassman LLC, Boston
Brown, Rudnick, Berlack, Israels LLP, Boston	MCLE Inc., Boston
Burns & Levinson LLP, Boston	Rich May, Boston
Debra L. Smith, Attorney at Law, Watertown	Seyfarth Shaw LLP, Boston
Dumont Law Office, Concord	Shalhoub & Orlacchio PC, Boston
Foley Hoag LLP, Boston	Todd & Weld LLP, Boston
Greenberg Traurig LLP, Boston	WilmerHale, Boston
Holland & Knight LLP, Boston	

Pledge Partners

Anderson & Kreiger LLP, Cambridge	Anna T. Green, Attorney At Law, Beverly	Law Office of Veronica Zolina, Maynard
Banner & Witcoff Ltd., Boston	Hutchins Law, Northborough	Stephen M. Linsky, Esq., Newton
Bay State Legal Services LLC, Boston	Infiniti Law Group, Quincy	Locke, Fullerton & Lundwall, Wellesley
Michelle Bennett, Attorney at Law, Palmer	Keegan Werlin LLP, Boston	Mackie Shea O'Brien PC, Boston
Bloom & Buell, Boston	Klevan & Klevan LLP, Wellesley	Margolis & Bloom LLP, Boston
Bogle & Okoye LLC, Boston	Lahive & Cockfield LLP, Boston	Allen J. Margulis, PC, Needham
Borchers Ware & Guglielmo PC, Medway	Law Offices of Jagruti Acharya, Marlborough	Martinelli Caputi & Associates Ltd., Warwick, RI
Bowditch & Dewey LLP, Worcester	The Law Office of Holly D. Battige, Monson	McIntyre Law Offices, Clinton
Bromberg & Sunstein, Boston	Law Offices of Joshua Blumen PC, Stoughton	McRoberts, Roberts and Rainer LLP, Boston
Dorothy Carlo, Attorney at Law, Holyoke	Law Offices of Rachele L. Boucher, Sagamore Beach	Milton, Laurence & Dixon, Worcester
Cetrulo & Capone, Boston	The Law Offices of Sean J. Cleary, Amherst	Modern Times Legal, Cambridge
Cohen & Sales, Cambridge	Law Office of Elizabeth Clarke, South Deerfield	Moschella & Winston, LLP, Somerville
Concannon Law Offices, Marshfield	Law Offices of Sherrill P. Cline PC, Marlborough	Nixon Peabody LLP, Boston
Contant Law Offices, Shirley	Law Offices of Maureen Counihan, Burlington	O'Connell Gillis LLC, Needham
Counsel On Call, Boston	Law Office of Ernesto T. Biando LLC, Spencer	Office of Roberta F. Sawyer, Duxbury
Curley Law Firm LLP, Wakefield	Law Office of Susan B. Frankfort, Danvers	Pierce, Davis & Perritano LLP, Boston
Dauids and Wollman, Swampscott	Law Office of Dawn Harkness Esq., Framingham	Petrucelly, Nadler & Norris PC, Boston
Deily, Mooney & Glastetter LLP, Brookline	Law Office of Stanley B. Kay, Wellesley Hills	Rackemann, Sawyer & Brewster PC, Boston
Susan DeMaria, Esq., Florence	Law Offices of Geraldine Kluska, Cambridge	Rosenberg, Freedman & Goldstein, Newton
Denner Pellegrino LLP, Boston	Law Office of Helen G. Litsas, Saugus	Schwartz Hannum PC, Andover
DGVE Law LLC, Hingham	Law Office of Erin McBee, North Andover	Mary Ellen Shea, Arbitrator, Private Practice, Amherst
The Divorce Collaborative LLC, Medway	Law Office of Glenn J. Murphy, Medway	Sherin and Lodgen LLP, Boston
Empire Settlement Funding, Quincy	Law Offices of Leonard Y. Nason PC, Bedford	Denise Squillante PC, Fall River
Family Estate Planning Law Group, Lynnfield	Law Office of Alice Olsen Mann PC, Lexington	Tarlow, Breed, Hart & Rodgers, PC, Boston
Robert A. Feuer, Attorney at Law, Stockbridge	Law Office of Kristin Palace, Topsfield	Thornton & Naumes, Boston
Gallagher & Cavanaugh LLP, Lowell	Law Offices of Spano & Dawicki, Saugus	Les Wallerstein, Attorney at Law, Lexington
Gesmer Updegrave LLP, Boston	Law Office of Erica J. Tritta, Norton	Whole Family Law and Mediation, Marshfield
Goulston & Storrs PC, Boston	Law Office of Usha Venkatesh, Methuen	Wolkon & Pascucci LLP, Boston
	Law Office of Craig Yankes, Burlington	



GREEN GUIDELINES

The Massachusetts Bar Association has created these GREEN GUIDELINES to assist lawyers to:

- A**ssess current environmental practices.
- C**ommit to adopting more sustainable practices.
- T**read more lightly on the Earth.

Sustainable practices are defined as using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged.

The MBA Energy and Environment Task Force recognizes that each lawyer's ability to implement these **MBA GREEN GUIDELINES** may depend on a number of factors. Some may have a greater ability to implement these guidelines than others and some may be able to institute measures that go far beyond the scope of the **MBA GREEN GUIDELINES**. We encourage everyone to use their **BEST EFFORTS** to implement the **MBA GREEN GUIDELINES** to the extent reasonably feasible and make them your own. Inspiring and educating yourself and others will ensure environmentally sustainable practices. Thank you for your participation. Together, we will make a difference.

ECO-CHALLENGE PARTNERS:

- 1 Designate one person in your organization as the environmental liaison.
- 2 Adopt and implement the **MBA GREEN GUIDELINES**. Make them your sustainability policy or customize them to your practice.
- 3 Educate co-workers about the policy and integrate it into new employee training. Educate attorneys with whom you share office space about these **MBA GREEN GUIDELINES**.
- 4 Implement a check system that regularly monitors this policy.
- 5 Encourage your landlord to review his or her sustainable practices.
- 6 Renew your pledge and commitment at the beginning of each year with the MBA.

As an **Eco-Challenge Partner**, action is needed in the following areas:

- * Energy conservation
- * Paper reduction
- * Recycling
- * Greenhouse gas reduction
- * Environmentally conscious purchases
- * Sustainable practices
- * Education
- * Support for environmental conservation

1 ENERGY CONSERVATION

LIGHTS

- ✳ Turn off the lights when you leave.
 - 🕒 If you have cleaning staff, verify that they will turn off the lights when they leave your office.
 - 🕒 Install motion detectors if you cannot verify the lights are being turned off.
- ✳ Substitute inefficient, older light bulbs with compact fluorescent light (CFL) or Light Emitting Diode (LED) bulbs.
 - 🕒 The CFL bulb needs 60 percent less energy than a conventional light bulb.
 - 🕒 The LED bulb lasts up to 60,000 hours and can use as little as two watts of energy.
- ✳ Replace old, inefficient light fixtures.

Why Take Action?

According to Energy Star, if every American home replaced just one light bulb with an Energy Star-qualified bulb, we would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes for a year and more than \$600 million in annual energy costs. This would prevent greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those of more than 800,000 cars.

Where To Buy

CFLs can be purchased at any local hardware or home improvement store. Visit EnergyFederation.org for more information.



COMPUTERS

Why Take Action?

Businesses spend \$1.7 billion in energy costs and cause 14.4 million tons of CO² emissions from computers left on after work, according to a PC Energy Awareness Report.



- ✳ Mandate the use of screen savers for computers.
- ✳ Require attorneys and staff to turn off computers after work and when idle for more than 30 minutes.

COPY MACHINES

- ✳ Ensure shared copy machines and printers are put in standby mode when not in use or turned off at the end of each day.

LANDLORDS

- ✳ If utility costs are included in your lease, work with your landlord to save energy and maximize building systems performance. For example, encourage your landlord to install compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs).
- ✳ Encourage your landlord to review their sustainable practices.
- ✳ Network and encourage co-tenants in your building to get involved in lowering energy costs by also supporting the **Tenant Environmental Request to Landlord**, available at MassBar.org/ecochallenge.
- ✳ Encourage landlord to buy green power. Visit EPA.gov/greenpower.
- ✳ Contact your local utility to request a free energy audit and educate landlord of results.
- ✳ Encourage your landlord to install a green roof. Visit GreenRoofs.org.
- ✳ Promote sustainable building practices used by the U.S. Green Building Council LEED program. Visit USGBC.org.

THERMOSTATS

- ✳ Calibrate thermostats to adjust for seasonal changes. Adjust your thermostat up two degrees in the summer and down two degrees in the winter.

MEASURE YOUR PROGRESS

- ✳ Create a record-keeping system to measure your program's effectiveness. One easy way is to keep track of your energy bills.

2 PAPER REDUCTION

- ✳ You can reduce your environmental impact substantially by choosing to use 100 percent recycled paper, ensuring that no forests were destroyed in the production of that paper. In most cases, you and your copy machine won't know the difference.
- ✳ Ensure your copiers and printers have an automatic duplex option. Encourage use of both sides of the paper on documents.
- ✳ Whenever possible, use Internet court and agency filing procedures.
- ✳ Electronically route faxes, interoffice memoranda and reports throughout office.
- ✳ Utilize the Internet to send documents when feasible.
- ✳ Process documents electronically using the scan option on a copier when appropriate, rather than printing hard copies.
- ✳ Refrain from printing e-mails when feasible.
- ✳ Create note pads from used paper printed on one side.
- ✳ Print documents in small fonts, with wide margins and reduced spacing.
- ✳ Use letter-sized paper, files and pouches rather than legal sized items whenever possible.
- ✳ Keep mailing lists up-to-date so as not to waste paper.
- ✳ Get off mailing lists. Go to 41pounds.org.
- ✳ Assess archive inventory to determine whether documents are ripe for recycling.
- ✳ Encourage sharing of phone and reference books (e.g., dictionaries, statutes) or use of online sources.

Safety Note — Always be sure to make computer backups when relying on electronic documents and e-mails.

Why Take Action?

Lawyers use 10 times more paper than the average office worker. Specifically, a lawyer will use a ton of paper each year which equates to approximately 24 trees cut each year per lawyer. There are over 1 million lawyers in the U.S. which means over 24 million trees are destroyed each year just to meet lawyers' demands for paper.



3 RECYCLING

- ✳ Be an avid recycler. Strive to recycle 100 percent of all paper, cardboard products, bottles, cans, etc.
- ✳ Install recycling bins at each workstation, copier, fax machine and kitchen/cafeteria.
- ✳ Provide recycling for bottles and cans.
- ✳ Provide a procedure for recycling items not accepted in standard recycling, such as Tyvek envelopes, batteries, plastic bags and computers.
- ✳ Work with town or city officials to set up a recycling program for small businesses and firms to recycle bottles, cans, newspapers, cardboard and magazines.

FOR HELP ON THIS SECTION, VISIT EARTH911.ORG.

Recycling Makes A Difference

There are literally hundreds of reasons to recycle. Here are a few:

- ✳ Recycling helps us reduce our reliance on foreign oil by saving energy. To that end, costly wars over natural resources including oil, minerals and timber have killed millions of people.
- ✳ Recycling eases the demand for resources. A 30 percent recycling rate would reduce greenhouse gas emissions comparable to removing approximately 25 million cars from the road. In just one year of recycling, Stanford University saved the equivalent of 33,913 trees and the demand for 636 tons of iron ore, coal and limestone.
- ✳ Recycling benefits the air and water by creating a net reduction in 10 major categories of air pollutants and eight major categories of water pollutants.



4 GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION

The Problem

Human actions such as burning fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas) and land clearing are generating more greenhouse gases. These additional greenhouse gases trap more heat and raise the Earth's surface temperature, which causes global warming.



- ✳ Encourage and utilize public transportation and carpooling.
- ✳ Encourage reducing the need for business travel by working from home, teleconferencing and other strategies.
- ✳ Provide a subsidy of at least 50 percent, preferably 100 percent, for using public transportation. This subsidy has great tax incentives for you and the members of your firm.
- ✳ Encourage personnel traveling on business to rent fuel-efficient cars.
- ✳ Avoid providing free parking for any personnel if alternative modes of transportation exist.
- ✳ Walk often. Join National Walk to Work Day. Go to Walking.About.com.
- ✳ Provide incentives for bike commuters such as financial, storage space and gym membership support. Participate in Bike to Work Week. Visit BikeLeague.org/programs/bikemonth.
- ✳ Purchase a car-sharing membership or set up a ride-share bulletin board.
- ✳ Purchase a hybrid vehicle.

5 ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS PURCHASES

Conscious Consuming

Before making a purchase, do a quick self-check:

- 🌱 Do I really need this product?
- 🌱 Is the product I need eco-friendly?
- 🌱 Is there another product I can purchase that will use less of the Earth's resources?



OFFICE ITEMS

- ✳ Purchase computers that are rated highly by the Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT). Visit EPEAT.net.
- ✳ Purchase Energy Star office equipment and appliances and give preference to equipment with an energy-saving device when replacing equipment. Go to EnergyStar.gov.
- ✳ Purchase fair trade coffee that is organic and shade grown.
- ✳ Purchase coffee, sugar, creamer, salt and pepper in bulk rather than in single-servings.
- ✳ Purchase computer monitors and printers that have an energy efficient "standby" mode, consuming 90 percent less energy than regular mode.
- ✳ Purchase dishwashing liquid, hand soap and automatic dishwashing detergent free of phosphates, triclosan, chlorine or other anti-bacterial ingredients.

PAPER

- ✳ Strive to purchase copy paper that is 100 percent post-consumer recycled content, but at least 30 percent post-consumer recycled.
- ✳ Always give preference to products with recycled content whenever available.
- ✳ Purchase file folders that have a minimum of 30 percent post-consumer recycled content.
- ✳ Strive to purchase letterhead, envelopes and legal pads with 100 percent post-consumer recycled content, or at least 30 percent post-consumer recycled.
- ✳ Purchase small-sized paper towels with 100 percent post-consumer recycled content and that are perforated in half sizes.
- ✳ Notify your suppliers that you have adopted these green [MBA GREEN GUIDELINES](#).

Environmentally Conscious Purchases (cont.)

PREFER SUSTAINABLE SERVICE PROVIDERS

- ✱ Give preference to vendors that use sustainable practices.
- ✱ Notify suppliers about firm's desire to purchase sustainable products.
- ✱ Encourage the use of lunch caterers that minimize disposables and purchase locally grown organic food.
- ✱ Encourage hiring event planners who have expertise in sustainable events.
- ✱ Specify soy-based ink for outsourced printing jobs.

6 SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

CONSERVE WATER

- ✱ Establish a regular maintenance protocol to check for and repair leaks in sinks and toilets.
- ✱ Post signs encouraging water conservation at sinks.

ELIMINATE DISPOSABLES

- ✱ Provide durable plates, cups, glasses and utensils for the kitchen and conference rooms rather than disposable items.
- ✱ Provide pitchers with filtered water, rather than bottled water, in conference rooms.
- ✱ For more information about solid and hazardous waste disposal in Massachusetts, visit the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection at Mass.Gov/dep.

REDUCE TOXIC PRODUCTS

- ✱ Purchase unbleached paper towels and napkins.
- ✱ Purchase kitchen cleaners with low toxicity and high biodegradability or clean with products such as baking soda, white vinegar and club soda.

REUSE EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

- ✱ Arrange for your supplier to pick up old cartridges for reuse or recycle old ink cartridges.
- ✱ Create an internal reuse center for supplies such as binders, file folders, large envelopes, etc.
- ✱ Donate old office equipment, furniture and supplies.
- ✱ Purchase remanufactured cartridges for laser printers.

7 EDUCATION

- ✱ Educate all employees about the program and recognize their participation.
- ✱ Invite and promote educational speakers on sustainability to be part of the firm training.
- ✱ Read, *A Healthy Environment Starts at Home*, a guide published by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority. MWRA.state.ma.us/index.html.

8 SUPPORT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

- ✱ Implement a workplace giving program that supports environmental nonprofits. Employers should consider matching employee donations.
- ✱ Support local environmental organizations.



INSPIRE

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GREEN GUIDELINES

Landscape Management



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- 3 Educate all employees about the policy and integrate it into new employee training.
- 4 Educate attorneys with whom you share office space about these **MBA GREEN GUIDELINES, LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT**.
- 5 Implement a check system that regularly monitors this policy.
- 6 Encourage your landlord to review his or her sustainable practices.
- 7 Review your pledge and consider enhancing your commitment at the beginning of each calendar year.

As an **Eco-Challenge Partner**, action is needed in the following areas:

-  Go Natural
-  Thoughtful Lawn Care
 -  Mowing
 -  Watering
 -  Pollution
 -  Fertilizers
 -  Lighting
 -  Soil and Planting





GO NATURAL

To the extent possible, it is environmentally preferable to move away from traditional lawns and instead plant native local plants. Creative planting of indigenous plants can provide an attractive — and comparatively low-maintenance — alternative to a lawn.

- 🌱 When landscaping, select native plants. They require much lower maintenance than exotic plants and are great water savers. Select plants that provide food or shelter for animals.
- 🌱 Choose grasses that require less water and don't grow as high, such as pure tall fescue. Because it is one of the most drought-tolerant species, it can be watered infrequently.
- 🌱 Whenever possible, eliminate invasive plants before they become out of control.
- 🌱 Compost food and yard waste to use as an organic fertilizer or mulch for lawns and gardens.
- 🌱 Create your own organic food garden. Especially in urban areas or in close proximity to buildings, be sure to test your soil for contaminants such as heavy metals before you grow edible produce.
- 🌱 Always purchase nursery propagated and grown native plants. Never remove plants from the wild.
- 🌱 For help with developing an organic lawn, visit the following sites:
 - 🌱 **Toxic Use Reduction Institute at U. Mass. Lowell**
www.HealthyLawnsforHealthyFamilies.org
 - 🌱 **Northeast Organic Farming Association**
www.NOFAmass.org
 - 🌱 **Ecological Landscaping Association**
www.ECOLandscaping.org
 - 🌱 **Organic Land Care Committee of Connecticut and Massachusetts**
www.OrganicLandCare.net
- 🌱 Learn about and buy native plants at the **Boston Natural Areas Network**, which operates a native plant nursery and horticultural learning center. www.bostonnatural.org/citynativesnursery.htm
- 🌱 Consult the “Native Plants Brochure” prepared by the **Great Lakes National Program Office of the Environmental Protection Agency**. www.EPA.gov/greenacres/navland.html
- 🌱 If you do not handle your own landscaping, ask your lawn care provider to do their best to follow these **Green Guidelines, Landscape Management**.



Why Take Action?

At least 4,000 species of non-native plants occur outside cultivation in the United States. Most cause few problems, but 79 species cost the U.S. economy more than \$97 billion annually in lost crops, failed recovery efforts for endangered species and control efforts, according to the New England Wild Flower Society.

THOUGHTFUL LAWN CARE

If you do wish to maintain a lawn, there are several steps you can take to make your lawn as green as possible:

Mowing:

- 🌱 Do not mow on a schedule. Wait until grass is between 4" to 5" high.
- 🌱 Set your mower as high as it will go (3" to 4"). Tall grass will shade weeds and aid in their destruction. Short grass is more vulnerable to disease and pests.
- 🌱 Leave grass clippings on the lawn. They add organic matter and nutrients that leach back into soil.
- 🌱 Where possible, use a push mower. Gas-powered mowers contribute to air and noise pollution, including greenhouse gas emissions. If necessary, choose cleaner alternatives, such as electric or battery-powered mowers.



Why Take Action?

One hour of mowing is the equivalent of driving 350 miles in terms of volatile organic compounds, according to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency statistics.



Watering:

-  Water only when your grass shows signs of drought stress. Grass will start to curl before it turns brown, at which time it is the best time to water. Note that a brown lawn in mid-summer is not a dying lawn, just a resting lawn during its semi-dormant state.
-  When watering, water deeply, i.e., at least 1" of water (put a cup out by your sprinkler to measure water). This encourages deeper root growth — grass roots are deeper than most weed roots.
-  Do not over-water. Soil can absorb only so much moisture, then rest runs off.
-  Avoid watering on windy days, as this can increase evaporation loss.
-  Water lawns early in the morning during the hotter summer months. Otherwise, much of the water will evaporate. Late-day watering can encourage mold growth.
-  To avoid excessive evaporation, use a sprinkler that produces large drops of water, not a fine mist. Sprinklers that send droplets out on a low angle also help control evaporation.
-  Use drip irrigation systems for bedded plants, trees or shrubs, or turn soaker hoses upside-down so the holes are on the bottom. This will help avoid evaporation.
-  Avoid automatic sprinkler systems that are timed to a schedule. If they must be used, rain shutoff devices are essential.
-  Collect runoff water from gutter downspouts in rain barrels for outdoor watering use.
-  Plant rain gardens (plants requiring moist soil) near down spouts.
-  Plant more trees to increase shade and reduce watering needs.
-  Evaporation loss can be 60 percent higher during the day, so water all plants during the evening hours.



Why Take Action?

Typical suburban houses use at least 30 percent of their water for outdoor lawn watering, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Some experts estimate that more than 50 percent of landscape water is wasted due to evaporation, wind, and/or over-watering.

Pollution:

-  Refrain from using pesticides. Try other alternatives instead: ladybugs eat aphids and marigolds ward off beetles.
-  Prevent runoff of fertilizers, chemical fluids, soaps, gray water, etc. into storm drains — they lead directly to water bodies.
-  Never place waste of any kind into storm drains. Waste can clog the storm drains and pollute water bodies.
-  Pick up pet waste. It generates disease-carrying bacteria and nutrients that can pollute water bodies.
-  Keep natural buffer zones intact around wetlands, streams, rivers and ponds. This will help prevent runoff into those water bodies and will provide important natural habitat for animals.
-  Never hose down sidewalks or driveways. The water runoff can carry oil or chemical runoff into water bodies.
-  Avoid gas-powered leaf blowers and snow blowers. They contribute significantly to air and noise pollution. Consider green alternatives, or opt for rakes and shovels.
-  If you must use a lawn mower, perform regular maintenance for efficiency.
-  Have your soil tested to check for the right levels of nutrients, as well as pollutants. **U. Mass. Amherst** offers this service for a fee to individuals and companies in all 50 states. www.UMass.edu/plsoils/soiltest



Why Take Action?

Five to 10 percent of the nation's air pollution is generated by gasoline-powered lawn & garden equipment, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.



Fertilizers:

-  Use white vinegar for weed removal.
-  Plant quick-sprouting plants to block weed growth.
-  Use food scraps, yard trimmings, and other organic waste to create a compost pile. Compost is a rich soil amendment that can help increase water retention, decrease erosion, and replace chemical fertilizers.
-  Make your own natural lawn fertilizer.
 -  Combine 2 c. water, 1 c. beer (the cheaper the better), 1 c. Epsom salts, 1 c. ammonia into a medium-sized container.
 -  Pour mixture into a watering can with a spray head.
 -  Distribute fertilizer as if you were watering your lawn.
 -  Pour leftover contents into re-sealable container.
 -  Wait two to three weeks.
 -  Reapply if necessary.

Tips and Warnings:

-  The beer will help feed the roots. The Epsom salts will keep the ground aerated by breaking it up; this will help it “breathe” and prevent it from getting hard. The ammonia will kill any fungus or bacteria in the dirt.
-  This recipe should fertilize an area 400-600 square feet, depending on the water pressure through the canister. You may need to increase the amount by doubling or tripling the recipe to meet your needs.
-  When working with ammonia, be careful not to inhale any of the fumes.

Lighting:

-  Avoid any outdoor lighting that is not necessary for safety.
-  Use solar or LED lighting in your yard.
-  Put outdoor lights on movement sensor switches.

Soil and Planting:

-  Fertilize with an organic fertilizer, and only when necessary. Grass in New England is dormant in the winter and semi-dormant in the summer. Fertilizing in the summer feeds the weeds, not the grass.
-  Avoid use of pesticides and herbicides if possible. Select non-toxic products.
-  Have the pH of your soil professionally tested. Add lime if it is below 6.0 and gardener’s sulfur if it is above 7.0.
-  Measure your top soil (i.e., how deep will a shovel go into the soil?) — 4" is adequate, but 8" or more is ideal.
-  Plant new seed when the time is right. The best time is from September into the first week in October. Spring, from the third week in April through May (weather depending), is also suitable. Since grass is a cool weather plant, do not attempt to plant grass in summer.
-  If you are planting or replacing part of a lawn, tall fescue may be a good choice. It is one of the most durable grasses and does well in shade and sun.
-  Over-seeding is a way to prevent weeds.
-  Buy equipment and tools made from recycled products.



Why Take Action?

Excess petrochemical and other synthetic fertilizers are the leading cause of water quality problems, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. They run off the land and are carried away by rainwater into streams, rivers, and ultimately the oceans, with harmful effects on drinking water supplies, recreation, fisheries, and wildlife.



Why Take Action?

Grasses grow best in slightly acidic soils with a pH of 6.0 to 6.5, according to the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. A soil test will determine the pH level of your soil.

INSPIRE

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