

## Mowing Tips for Spring

There are more than 30 million acres of lawns across the United States. The Professional Landcare Network (PLANET), the nation's lawn and landscape association, offers consumers the following mowing tips.

- **Give your lawn mower a check up.** Make sure the blades are sharp and the oil has been changed. Also, drain last season's gas and use fresh gas.
- **Don't scalp your yard.** Don't cut your grass too short, particularly for cool season grass. Taller grass results in a deeper root system and a lawn that is less likely to encourage invasive weeds. It also protects your lawn from scorching.
- **Avoid mowing when the grass is wet.** Mowing wet grass can encourage mold and fungus and will quickly dull your lawn mower blades and chew up your lawn.
- **Change direction.** Mow your lawn in a different direction with each mowing, especially with lawns of shorter grass types. Altering the direction ensures a more even cut since grass blades will grow more erect and will be less likely to develop into a set pattern.
- **Don't compensate by overcutting.** Never mow more than one-third of the grass leaf at a time. If circumstances arise where a lawn gets too tall and you have to cut off a lot, do it in several mowings with three or more days between cuttings.
- **Be safe.** Keep children and pets away. Wear closed-toe shoes and long pants, as well as eye protection. Never cut the lawn when it's raining, lightening, or when grass is slippery. Do not push a lawn mower onto the pavement. The lawn keeps objects from being hurled at a high speed; there is no such protection on the pavement.
- **Do your homework.** Determine your grass type and the best height for optimal health. Also, read the operating guide for your mower. Make sure you understand all of its safety features prior to use.
- **Hire a professional.** When in doubt, hire a professional. They are trained to keep your lawn healthy, and they know how to safely operate equipment.

For more information, or to find a lawn care and landscape professional, log on to [LandcareNetwork.org/findaprofessional](http://LandcareNetwork.org/findaprofessional) or call the PLANET office at (800) 395-2522.