

No Mow May: What Next?

by Amanda Ingrassia, Fairfield Pollinator Pathway Co-Chair



Hi Polleneighbors,

Thank you for putting out your No Mow May signs!

Now that you have embraced creating a habitat that offers food sources for our pollinators, it is important to maintain your lawn and equipment, too.

A few things to consider:

1. An acceptable practice is to mow a border or a walkway in the lawn for high-use areas. This can make your lawn look "neater" too, for our lawn-loving neighbors.
2. Once you do mow, manage the grass purposely: raise the blade height on the mower to the highest setting, collect the grass clippings so they don't smother the grass, and don't cut more than 1/3 of the grass at a time or it could die.
3. Take stock and notice- What insects do you see? What does your lawn look like after 2 weeks of not mowing, and could you mow less frequently all summer long then? Two-week periods seem to result in the most bee diversity, according to [research from Massachusetts](#).

Tips for mowing long grass at the conclusion of No Mow May for promoting a healthy lawn:

- **Adjust your mower to the highest setting** and make the first pass to reduce the grass height. After you have reduced the grass height to a more manageable length, change the mower setting by reducing the height of the blade, before making a second pass.
- **Do not cut more than 1/3 of the grass blade** at a time in a single mowing. For example, if your grass is 6 inches tall, do not remove more than 2 inches of length. This helps prevent root stress and promotes turf vigor.
- **Do not mow or blow grass clippings into the street.** Grass and leaves in the street can travel with rainwater into stormwater sewers. Many stormwater facilities flow directly into our local rivers without pretreatment and the added nutrients can cause algal blooms and other detrimental effects.



Resources:

[Cut Back your Lawn Gradually.](#) (See tip #4)

[Low Mow May in Madison, Wisconsin.](#) Benefits of mowing once every 2 weeks.

[No Mow May is over...Now What?](#) Lawns mowed every 2 weeks had the most bees according to research.

[No Mow May, De Pere, Wisconsin.](#) See the "Tips for mowing long grass at the end of No Mow May..."