



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **A Growing Movement in Middlesex County: Grasscycling**

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY** – The Middlesex County Improvement Authority’s Recycling Division is launching its annual “grasscycling” campaign in sync with the height of the region’s mowing season, as recent data confirms.

The Division has spent years promoting grasscycling, the practice of leaving short grass clippings on the lawn rather than bagging and dragging them to the curb.

A quarter of the 5,293 tons of grass collected from the County’s 24 participating municipalities in 2012 was recycled in May, according to recently released Division statistics.

Each year, the Division’s staff is faced with the challenge of correcting a common misconception that leftover grass clippings can cause thatch, or unwelcome dead grass roots and stems, said Recycling Division Manager Ed Windas.

“The real source of thatch is overwatering, overfertilizing or cutting your lawn too short,” Windas said. “In reality, grass particles act as a natural fertilizer for lawns because they redistribute nitrogen into the ground. Studies have shown that grasscycling helps to shelter tender grass roots from the sun, conserves moisture and encourages weed-and-disease-resistant lawns.”

Once collected, these clippings are either processed into a soil additive by a vendor or transported to the state’s landfills, where grass assists in speeding up waste decomposition, Windas said.

Aside from its positive environmental implications, grasscycling can also pay-off for participating municipalities and residents in other ways – in this case, in dollars and cents.

Grass clippings are one of the more expensive yard waste products to recycle, costing Middlesex County communities \$37 per ton for disposal.

“When it comes down to it, the best incentives spring from a financial return on your efforts,” said Freeholder and MCIA liaison Carol Barrett Ballante. “Ironically, this is one of those few occasions where doing less translates into more money saved.”

In fact, experts estimate that dropping the bag-and-drag routine will reduce the average time spent on lawn care by up to 35 percent.

For grasscycling converts looking to significantly minimize the appearance of clippings on their lawn, Windas recommended investing in a mulch mower.

For more information on Middlesex County’s recycling initiatives and programs contact MCIA staff at 1-800-488-6242 or visit [www.mciauth.com](http://www.mciauth.com).

**MEDIA CONTACT: Jane Leal, 609-655-5141, [jl@mciauth.com](mailto:jl@mciauth.com)**