

# LIVING LANDSCAPES MATTER



Yards provide a safe place for families to gather and for children and pets to play. But did you know these managed landscapes, including your lawn, also provide a host of environmental benefits?

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A LAWN?



### FILTERS AND CAPTURES RUNOFF

Hardscapes, parking lots, driveways and roads turn rainwater into fast-moving, storm water runoff. Grass slows down and absorbs runoff, while also cleansing water of impurities and dust. Rainwater filtered through a healthy lawn can be 10 times less acidic than water off a hard surface.<sup>1</sup>



### REDUCES HEAT

Grass dissipates the heat island effect caused by asphalt, concrete and other hardscapes. Lawns can be 31 degrees cooler than asphalt and 20 degrees cooler than bare soil.



### IMPROVES AIR QUALITY

Grass also plays a vital role in capturing dust, smoke particles and other pollutants.<sup>2</sup> Without grass, these pollutants will remain in the air we breathe, resulting in more “code red” air quality days.



### SEQUESTERS CARBON DIOXIDE

Lawns are the largest carbon sink in the U.S. They suck up and remove greenhouse gas carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Grass sequesters carbon so well, that it outweighs the carbon used for maintaining the lawn by as much as seven-fold.<sup>3</sup>



### GENERATES OXYGEN

A turfgrass area 50' X 50' produces enough oxygen to meet the daily needs of a family of 4.<sup>4</sup>



### SUPPORTS BIODIVERSITY

Grass, trees, shrubs and other plants provide food and habitat for birds and small mammals. Insects, spiders and worms live among the grass blades and below the surface, supporting wildlife.



### CONTROLS SOIL EROSION

Grass controls erosion through its natural, dense and fibrous root system. Without grass, soil erodes into streams and lakes, muddying the waters and limits how sunlight penetrates the water. The nutrients and chemicals carried with soil can cause algae blooms, which steal oxygen from the water and kill fish.<sup>5</sup>

For more information go to:  
[www.opei.org/stewardship/](http://www.opei.org/stewardship/)

Source: 1. The Lawn Institute, <http://www.thelawninstitute.org/pages/environment/benefits-of-lawn/grass-purifies-water/> 2. The Lawn Institute, <http://www.thelawninstitute.org/pages/environment/benefits-of-lawn/air-quality-and-turfgrass/> 3. U.S. Department of Agriculture, <http://www.reelis.usda.gov/web/crisprojectpages/0223645-evaluation-of-turfgrass-for-stress-tolerance-in-a-transition-zone-environment.html> 4. The Lawn Institute, <http://www.scienturfhosod.com/growing-great-lawns/lawns-and-the-air-that-we-breathe/> 5. Kansas Green Yards, <http://www.kansasgreennyards.org/p.aspx?tabid#35>

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