



Is “No Mow May” the Pollinator Solution?

Edgerton’s City Council recently debated the costs and benefits of No Mow May. Last year, Edgerton’s City Council suspended enforcement of the City’s mowing policy for the month of May to allow interested residents to participate in the No Mow May initiative. After another lively debate about the costs and benefits to pollinators of the No Mow May movement, the Council will again set aside enforcement of the mowing policy for May this year but has requested more education about how to best support pollinators.

What is No Mow May?

No Mow May is a community science initiative, popularized in recent years, that encourages property owners to limit their lawn mowing practices during the month of May. The goal of No Mow May is to provide early-season foraging resources for pollinators that emerge in the spring, especially in urban landscapes when few floral resources are available.¹

The Pros of Not Mowing in May

A 2020 study in Appleton, Wisconsin, in which 435 property owners participated in No Mow May, found that participating homes had more diverse and abundant flora than the regularly-mowed green spaces throughout the city. No Mow May homes had three times higher bee richness and five times higher bee abundances than frequently-mowed greenspaces. While the findings cannot conclusively attribute increases in bee abundances and richness to the No Mow May efforts, the data does show that bee pollinators make use of unmowed spaces as key floral resources during early spring in the upper midwestern United States.¹

The No Mow May initiative has proven to be an effective educational tool that can inform land owners of the opportunity urban landscapes provide to support pollinators. The No Mow movement can also result in community conversations leading to changes in local policies that can allow for more diverse landscapes than a typical, suburban lawn, thus serving the needs of pollinators.

The Cons of Not Mowing in May

By the end of the month, lawns will likely be about a foot long and difficult to clean up. Many mowers will have a very difficult time mowing grass that long. When you allow grass to grow long and then suddenly cut it, the mowing can send grass into shock. Grass roots become diminished and the lawn can weaken, making it susceptible to insects, diseases, and weeds.²

Many suburban lawns, even when long, are not particularly beneficial to pollinators since they do not have any flowering species. If a lawn has been treated previously with herbicides so that it has no species other than traditional turf grass, letting it grow will not produce flowers for pollinators.

One of the worst outcomes for pollinators in a lawn after mowing starts again is a tendency for home owners to use even more herbicides and pesticides to get the lawn “back in shape.” One of the most important ways to save our pollinators is to not use pesticides or herbicides. According to [Beyond Pesticides](#), 78 million U.S. households use home and garden pesticides, actually eclipsing the use by the agricultural industry. More than 90 million pounds of herbicides are applied to lawns and gardens every year!²

Encouraging Long-Term Pollinator Solutions

Low Mow: The City of Madison and Dane County made intentional decisions to opt for a **Low Mow** model instead of No Mow, citing research that shows mowing every other week supports the highest bee and pollinator population. Micah Kloppenburg, the Wisconsin pollinator conservation specialist with Xerxes Society, concurred that Low Mow is a more sustainable model and that low frequency mowing allows flowering species in lawns to bloom and provide nectar to those emerging pollinators. Madison’s “Low” Mow May policy recommends reducing the frequency of mowing to twice during the month of May instead of every seven to 10 days, or raising mower height to four inches from the more typical two to three inches.³

Create a Permanent Pollinator Garden: No Mow May lasts one month, but by planting a continuously blooming pollinator garden, you can help pollinators all year long.⁴

Manage your lawn as a “bee lawn”: Allow your lawn to flower throughout the growing season. “Just raising your mowing height to four or four-and-a-half inches really keeps the majority of flowering plants intact,” explains Koch. Another option is to reseed your lawn with a “bee lawn” seed mix, which combines turf grass with low-growing flowers, such as white clover and creeping thyme. Over time, you might grow to appreciate the new wild aesthetic of your lawn while also benefiting from needing to mow less frequently.⁴

Avoid pesticides and weed-killer: If you’re trying to grow lawn flowers and feed the bees, avoid applying chemicals that will harm them. For example, “weed and feed” products will blitz your lawn flowers. And some products designed to kill grubs contain toxins that are deadly to bees and other pollinators, such as neonicotinoid insecticides.⁴

Grow native flowers: Think beyond the lawn and try some native plants in your beds and gardens. You’ll be amazed at the variety and beauty of the plants from your area that bees and other pollinators love. You could even ditch the lawn altogether and convert your front yard into a prairie. Aim to have something in bloom throughout the entire growing season so that pollinators always have a food supply.⁴

Gives Bees Nesting Places: There are 4,000 bee species native to North America and most of those don’t form hives. Instead, individual female bees lay their eggs in tunnels in decaying wood or in sandy soil. You can offer such nesting spots by leaving tree snags on your property, by leaving bare batches of sandy soil, or by building or buying whimsical native bee houses.⁵

Even if No Mow May isn’t possible for you, taking any of these steps can help both native bees and honeybees, as well as a variety of other important pollinators.⁵

1. Israel Del Toro and Relena R. Ribbons, No Mow May lawns have higher pollinator richness and abundances: An engaged community provides floral resources for pollinators

2. Robyn Hurtig, No Mow May: Pro’s and Cons of this Pollinator Movement, Greenwise website

3. Allison Garfield, Low Mow and No Mow May: What’s the buzz on the growing trend in Madison? Capital Times, (May 30, 2022)

4. Anne Reade, 5 Ways to Participate in “No Mow May” and Help Bees This Spring, Better Homes and Gardens, (April 14, 2022)

5. David Mizejewski, 10 Ways to Save Pollinators, National Wildlife Foundation

2023 SPRING ELECTION

Polls will be open at City Hall on April 4, 2023 from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm.

If you have questions or need assistance with any of your voting options, please contact your friendly staff at Edgerton City Hall (608) 884-3341 or go to the Wisconsin Voter Information Center at www.elections.wi.gov/voters.

Local Candidates

Alderpersons

First District

Shawn Prebil
Matt McIntyre

Second District

Candy Davis

Third District

Paul Davis

School Board

Jeremiah Johnson
Brandon Ferrell
Leia Maves

NOTICE

Do not place ballots in the drop box per court order. Ballots must be mailed or dropped off by the voter.

Celebrate Arbor Day Friday, April 28, 2023

Look for event details on
Facebook and at
www.cityofedgerton.com

CITY SERVICE NOTES

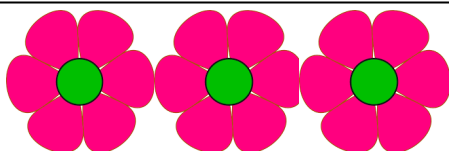
Swimming Pool and Lawns

What do these two things have in common? They both use water that does not end up at the wastewater treatment plant. The City Council updated regulations related to credits for filling a swimming pool and watering landscaping. If you have a swimming pool that is more than 1,000 gallons, you can request a meter reading before and after you fill your pool in order to avoid sewer charges on the water that went into the pool. To obtain the credit, residents must follow specific rules, so **please call City Hall before you start filling.**

The updated policy also clarifies that credits will not be given for water used on landscaping or lawns. If you plan to use a lot of water on your lawn, you can purchase a special irrigation meter from the city. An irrigation meter measures the amount of water used to water your landscaping. With an irrigation meter, you do not have to pay sewer charges on that water, since it does not go to the wastewater treatment plant.

TO THE CITY OF EDGERTON BARTENDERS

Operators' licenses expire on June 30, 2023. A renewal application must be submitted to the City of Edgerton no later than May 12, 2023 to allow time for background checks to be completed. Applications will be approved at the June 5, 2023 Finance Committee meeting. Applications can be picked up at City Hall or online at www.cityofedgerton.com.



Large item pick-up is at the end of every month on your regularly scheduled pick up day. (See schedule on the city's website) You are not required to call to request a pick up. If you have a large item that requires two people to collect, like a refrigerator, Badgerland would appreciate a call. (608) 580-0580.

CEMETERY & COMPOST

Fassett Cemetery: Flowers and decorations on the graves need to be removed by April 15th to get ready for spring cleanup. Flowers may be replaced no sooner than the Friday before Mother's Day.

Compost: Looking for a place to dispose of leaves, grass clippings, twigs and garden debris? There is a compost pile located at Fassett Cemetery. These items will not be collected at the curb. Check the City's website for compost site hours.

Home Compost Bins Sale

The City has home compost bins available for purchase again this year. The 125-gallon bin costs \$46. The bins will be sold on a first-come/first-serve basis.

You can reserve a bin by submitting your payment to City Hall. The receipt you receive with your purchase will be your "ticket" to pick up a bin. Bins will be distributed from Fassett Cemetery. Pickup hours will coincide with the hours of operation of the compost site. Check the City's website for compost site hours.

E-Waste

The dates for this year's two e-waste collection events are April 22 and September 23 at the Public Works Garage 315 W High Street. Watch the City's website for details of the events.

AQUATIC CENTER

The Edgerton Pool will open for the 2023 season on June 4 at 12:00pm. Pre-season pass sales will be May 22nd. Time of sales will vary! Please check the pool windows or our website for sale times.

Forms are available on the city's website www.cityofedgerton.com. Just fill in the form and return to Edgerton City Hall at 12 Albion St with your payment.



Is it Really Flushable?

Just because something will physically go down the toilet does not mean it should be flushed. Flushing items that are not flushable causes backups in sanitary sewer mains which can cause backups in homes. Non flushable items that reach the wastewater treatment plant cause problems with plant equipment.

Please never flush:

- Baby wipes, moist wipes, paper towel, facial tissues (even is labeled flushable)
- Bandages, dressings
- Dental floss, string or thread
- Tampons, condoms, sanitary napkins, diapers
- Fats, oils, grease
- Wrappers, plastic bags
- Sponges
- Fish gravel
- Fabric/clothing

Thank you for your cooperation!