

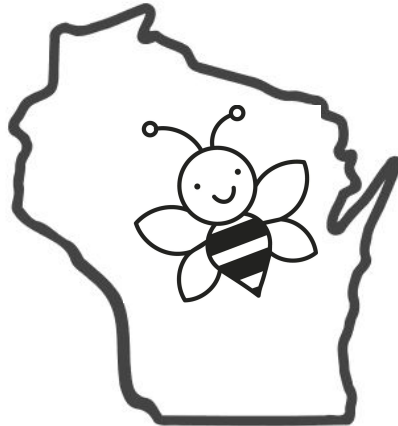
No Mow May

Sustainable Madison Committee - 4/25/2022

No Mow May

Two years ago, Appleton became the first city in the U.S. to adopt "No-Mow May," an initiative designed to boost the population of bees and other pollinators.

Other Cities in WI: Village of Shorewood Hills, Monona, Middleton, Sun Prairie, Wausau, Oshkosh, Fort Atkinson and Stevens Point, De Pere, Wisconsin Rapids, La Crosse



No Mow May



HOME NEWS WEATHER ARTS & CULTURE MUSIC EVENTS SHOWS

WPR



A bee visits a sunflower during a campaign event for Snodgrass, a candidate for the Wisconsin State Assembly, on Wednesday, Aug. 12, 2020, in Appleton. Angelo Major/WPR

What you need to know about No-Mow May, the bee-boosting trend sweeping Wisconsin



Local cities split as more Wisconsin communities embrace "No Mow May"



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LOCAL NEWS

No Mow May creates buzz across Wisconsin

New ordinances consider health of pollinators to help with health of food supply

Posted: April 21, 2022 6:45 PM
by Eric Franke



No Mow May - Background on Pollinators

“Three-fourths of the world’s flowering plants and about 35 percent of the world’s food crops depend on animal pollinators to reproduce.

More than 3,500 species of native bees help increase crop yields.

Some scientists estimate that one out of every three bites of food we eat exists because of animal pollinators like bees, butterflies and moths, birds and bats, and beetles and other insects.”

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/plantsanimals/pollinate/>



No Mow May - Background on Pollinators

“U.S. National Agricultural Statistics show a honey bee decline from about 6 million hives in 1947 to 2.4 million hives in 2008, a 60 percent reduction.”

(A Survey of Honey Bee Colony Losses in the U.S., Fall 2007 to Spring 2008
<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0004071>)

“We found that after the 1990s, the number of collected bee species declines steeply such that approximately 25% fewer species were reported between 2006 and 2015 than before the 1990s.”

(Worldwide occurrence records suggest a global decline in bee species richness
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590332220306515>)

Top Reasons for Population Decline:

- 1) Habitat Loss
- 2) Climate Change
- 3) Harmful usage of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers

No Mow May - Background

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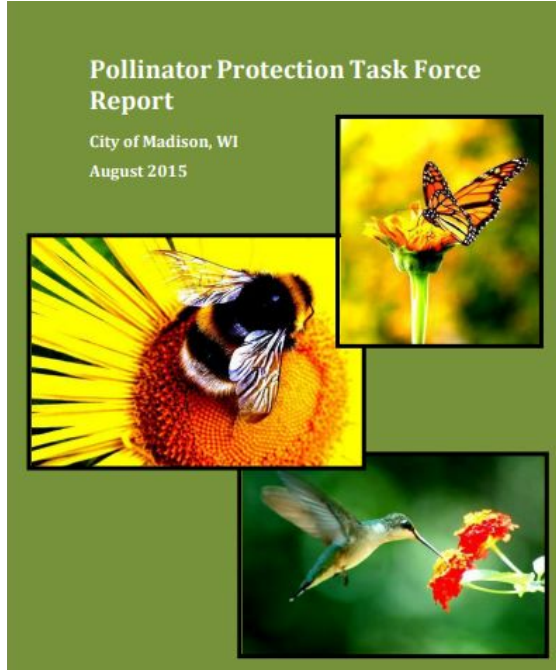
The idea is to give homeowners the option of letting their lawns get a bit overgrown for a few weeks to ensure that bees that are coming out of hibernation have plenty of options for the nectar and pollen they need.

<https://www.wpr.org/what-you-need-know-about-no-mow-may-bee-boosting-trend-sweeping-wisconsin>



Israel Del Toro, a biology professor at Appleton's Lawrence University.

No Mow May - City of Madison



2017 - Legistar File No. 46806



2022 - Legistar File No. 70979

[https://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/documents/Pollinator%20Protection%20Task%20Force%20Report%20FINAL%203-24-16\(1\).pdf](https://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/documents/Pollinator%20Protection%20Task%20Force%20Report%20FINAL%203-24-16(1).pdf)

No Mow May - City of Madison

Some Considerations:

Sec. 27.05(2)(f), the subsection that requires grass to be mowed to a height not to exceed 8"

https://library.municode.com/wi/madison/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COORMAWIVOIICH20--31_CH27MIHOPRMACO_27.05SASAMAPR



City of Madison DPCED
Building Inspection

BI: In regard to the "No Mow May" effort, we are not too concerned about this being a problem, because typically grass doesn't grow to over 8" during the month of May, especially if we have a colder/late spring. So, if we get tall grass complaints this year, we are looking to set any deadline for cutting grass to be set to some date after June 1. #NoMowMay

No Mow May - City of Madison

Some Considerations:

- Mowing after 1 month of growth can be stressful to turf, removing the majority of the photosynthetic capacity and cut down to the stem -The plants would likely survive, but would be weaker and more prone to drought stress, weed encroachment, insect pests, disease pests, etc.
-
- Longer grass once resumed to being mowed leads to more wear & tear on equipment, lead to more gasoline usage & emissions, clog storm drains near curb, or cause thinning of patches leading to more runoff

(Paul Koch, Ph.D. - Associate Professor - Department of Plant Pathology - Molecular and Environmental Toxicology Center - University of Wisconsin - Madison)

No Mow May - City of Madison

Some Considerations

Medians & Terraces



Parks & Recreation



No Mow May - City of Madison

“As per our research, we found that grass heights of ~12.5 cm / 5 inches, which equated to mowing roughly every two weeks supported the highest abundances of bees, and the abundance was related to the amount of lawn flowers present (e.g., dandelions, clover, violets).”

Susannah B Lerman, PhD - Research Ecologist - Forest Service - Northern Research Station

Research finds that only mowing your lawn every two weeks, instead of every week, increases bee populations by 30 percent.

<https://www.popularmechanics.com/science/animals/a19550487/dont-mow-your-lawn-and-help-save-the-bees/>

Research Paper:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0006320717306201>



No 'Low' Mow May - City of Madison

Recommendations

- Frequency
 - Mowing once in May instead of every 7-10 days

AND / OR

- Height
 - raising your mower height to 4" from a more typical 2"-3"

Other: Buffer Zones, Native Plantings, Permanent Conservation, etc.



No 'Low' Mow May - Next Steps

Resolution

- Introduced at the 5/10 Common Council Meeting

