



For Immediate Release: May 13, 2021, Noon CST  
Contact: Ryan Anderson, [randerson@ipminstitute.org](mailto:randerson@ipminstitute.org)  
Midwest Grows Green, 773-878-8245  
[MidwestGrowsGreen.org](http://MidwestGrowsGreen.org)

## The City of Elgin designates portion of Lords Park as a pesticide free zone

Thanks to technical expertise provided by the non-profit sustainable landscaping initiative [Midwest Grows Green](#) (MGG), the [City of Elgin](#) has designated approximately three acres of turfgrass on the northeast corner of Lords Park for natural lawn care (NLC) management.

“The City of Elgin continues to look for opportunities to find areas well suited for pesticide free land management practices, and this initiative creates such an area at our second largest regional park,” said Elgin Mayor David Kaptain. “We hope all Elgin residents learn about the benefits of natural lawn care techniques and find ways to implement them in their own yards to both promote healthy lawns and improve the quality of Elgin waterways.”

In recent years, the City of Elgin has worked to reduce herbicide applications on properties to limit chemical exposure while still maintaining weed control and aesthetic quality in high-visibility areas. Several sites had herbicide and fertilizer treatments reduced from five to three per year. Pesticide Free Zones were also created on three sites. This work supports many goals and objectives outlined in the City’s [Sustainability Action Plan](#) adopted in 2011 as well as the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus’ [Greenest Region Compact 2](#), adopted in 2017.

Last fall, MGG’s team visited, tested and assessed Lords Park to develop a three-year management plan for a large area of turfgrass that refrains from using synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.

“Our NLC approach addresses the root causes of weed and pest problems such as poor soil drainage, nutrient deficiency or soil compaction, as opposed to the symptoms of just applying a weed or pest killing product,” said Ryan Anderson, MGG’s leader and Community Outreach Specialist for the [IPM Institute of North America](#).

This fall, MGG will arrange the delivery of 100 cubic yards of compost from [Green Soils Management](#) and [Midwest Compost](#) to improve soil quality in the area of Lord’s Park.

“The high organic matter content of compost will improve turfgrass and soil performance by reducing compaction, increasing the water holding capacity and, most importantly, eliminating chemical inputs,” said Anderson.

To disrupt the life cycle of pests and weeds in the area of Lords Park, Elgin will heighten its mowing practices, implement a core aeration program for the spring and fall and institute an 100% organic fertilization program. In addition, the City will install new interpretive signage in the area of Lords Park that shares NLC tips and resources.





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To learn more about natural lawn care and apply these practices to your own lawn, please visit and take the MGG pledge at [bit.ly/MGGpledge](https://bit.ly/MGGpledge) or visit MGG's newest resource for pesticide reduction strategies on sports fields at [LawnandLand.org](http://LawnandLand.org).

A couple of easy steps to manage your lawn naturally, effectively and safely include:

- **Water Deeply and Infrequently:** This encourages deep root growth. Aim for [one inch per week](#). You can easily measure that amount by placing a cup in your yard while watering. You're done watering for the week when the cup fills one inch deep. Water early in the morning to minimize disease problems.
- **Mow High:** Keep your lawn mowed at three inches or higher (but not higher than 8 inches per city code). This increases root strength and naturally shades out weeds, so your grass withstands drought and stays green longer. Don't mow unless needed.
- **Use Organic Fertilizer:** Commercial fertilizers easily wash away, polluting nearby lakes and streams. Many contain toxic weed killers. Choose an organic fertilizer to capture and deliver nutrients in the lawn [throughout the growing season](#). Keep grass clippings on the lawn as they provide an excellent natural fertilizer.
- **Weed Naturally:** Proper lawn care maintenance naturally eliminates most weeds. Annual reseeding gives grass an advantage over weeds. Avoid using pesticides, as they can harm other beneficial living things such as bees, worms, and birds. The right tool makes quick work of weeding. After pulling weeds, use grass seed and soil to fill in the hole. Your grass will grow strong and healthy as a result.

### **About Midwest Grows Green**

Midwest Grows Green is an initiative of the [IPM Institute of North America, Inc.](#) that accomplishes large scale behavior change by sharing pesticide and fertilizer reduction information at critical places where lawns influence our lives. The IPM Institute is an independent 501(c)3 non-profit started in 1998 that improves sustainability in agriculture and communities through market mechanisms based in Integrated Pest Management.

### **About Elgin, Illinois**

Nestled along the banks of the Fox River, Elgin, Illinois is approximately 38 miles northwest of downtown Chicago and is home to over 112,000 people. The growing city enjoys ready access to public transportation, diverse housing stock and a mix of commercial establishments. The city's AAA bond rating is testament to its strong financial management and solid economic environment. Many national and international businesses have taken advantage of Elgin's close proximity to the Elgin-O'Hare Tollway and to the "Golden Corridor of Technology and Commerce" along Interstate-90. Elgin features a nationally acclaimed library system, an array of healthcare options and educational opportunities for all ages. Residents and visitors enjoy a thriving cultural arts community, world-class parks, award-winning golf courses, historical museums and nearly 200 places of worship. This vibrant, diverse and volunteer-rich community is known for its strong history of civic engagement.