Alternatives to Using Lawn Pesticides

As we dream of budding trees and verdant lawns, there are environment issues to consider, the most important of which concerns the danger of chemicals that are routinely used for lawn care. Here is some information about the problem of these pesticides, and about alternative ways to have that green lawn.

What are the dangers of pesticides?

- Pesticides are poisons that can be inhaled, ingested or absorbed through the skin after application. They can have these effects for many days after application - endangering your family, neighbors, pets, wildlife, and generations to come. They are especially hazardous to children, the elderly, pregnant women, and people with chronic health conditions.
- Don't be misled if someone says that "just an herbicide" is being used, and that it is registered by the EPA. An "herbicide" is a generic term for a type of pesticide that is used to destroy or inhibit plant growth. All pesticides are registered by the EPA, and it is unlawful to market them as "safe."

How can I "green" my lawn while avoiding the use of pesticides/herbicides?

- Go to the website of the organization **GreenNewton**, www.greennewton.org. In their *Resources* section you can find helpful information about alternatives to Pesticides, as well as other helpful advice about organic gardening, composting, and recycling.
- Talk with your lawn services provider, if you have one, about options, as early in the season as possible, or switch to a provider who is more "green" savvy.
- A healthy lawn is a dynamic eco-system - it may have some weeds and insects. Have realistic goals, and be patient while you transition from chemical to natural methods.
- Avoid taking walks or exercising where you see landscapers have applied chemicals, even after the signs are gone. Teach children to stay away from areas where pesticide warning signs are posted.
- See the list of **Local Organic Lawn Care Services**, and **Organic Gardening and Landscaping Suppliers** on the Green Decade Website.