

Lawn Care Tips

Mowing properly is one of the most important factors in the overall health of your lawn.

The first item to be considered when mowing is height. Lawns in our area contain blends of cool season grasses and should be cut at the ideal 3 inch height. By mowing at this height you are shading the soil beneath the plant and thereby reducing moisture loss. Mowing height also has a direct impact on the root system of the plant. The higher the cut, the deeper the root, and therefore the healthier the plant.

Mowing frequency depends on growth. Cutting should be done often enough so that no more than one third (approximately one inch) of the plant is removed at one time. Mowing once a week may not be enough. Removing more than one third of the plant can injure the root system which could take some time to recover. Mowing should not be done during the heat of the day as this will also stress the plants.

Your mower blade should be sharpened regularly to ensure a clean cut. A dull blade will shred the leaf of the plant opening it to disease. If possible change the direction you mow each time to prevent compaction and wear of the turf.

Clippings should be left on the lawn whenever possible since this adds moisture and nutrients back into the soil. Mulching mowers are ideal. They are designed to cut the clippings multiple times before depositing them on the lawn. If clumps of clippings are left behind, they should be removed as this can smother the underlying turf. This can be avoided by mowing frequently and mowing when the turf is dry.



Watering is important in the overall health of your lawn.

A frequently asked question is, when and how often should I water? The simple answer to this is when the lawn needs it. There are a few ways to determine this. There is the footprint test. Walk across the lawn and if the turf does not spring back after a short time, this is an indication that watering is needed. Another way is by observed appearance. Irregular patterns with a purplish hue will appear as the turf begins to show signs of drought. This is caused by the leaf turning over and beginning to wilt so that you are seeing the underside of the grass leaf.

A lawn usually requires between 1 and 1 1/2 inches of water per week. Water heavily and infrequently to promote a deeper root system. Light watering should be avoided since this will only dampen the soil surface and can easily evaporate. Areas in full sun will require water more often than areas in the shade. When watering, place an empty plastic container with a one inch marking so you can determine how long to leave the sprinkler in one area. For larger lawns, consider watering the front one day and the back another day. Lawn watering is best done in the early morning to prevent evaporation. If this is not possible, another time would be early evening.



Seeding will help in the maintenance of your lawn.

Seeding of bare/thin areas will not only improve the overall appearance of your lawn, but will also help prevent the germination of various weed seeds, including crabgrass. Lawns in our area usually contain blends of Kentucky Bluegrass, Perennial Ryegrass and Fescues. Shaded portions of turf require seed blends containing higher amounts of Fescues as this variety performs better in these areas. New varieties of grass seed are being developed which will withstand disease development. Some varieties also contain an endophyte (a fungi) which helps the plant resist chinch bugs, a common pest in lawns. In most cases, the more expensive the seed the better the quality of turf produced. Professional slit seeding is available as one of our services. Instructions on how to take care of newly seeded areas is provided at the time of this service.