

## *Success Tip...*

### **Established Lawn Care**

#### **Watering**

Lawns generally require the equivalent of 1"-1.5" of rain every week. If rainfall is insufficient you must supply the difference. Frequent short waterings are actually harmful to your lawn. They encourage a shallow root system that will be hard pressed to withstand drought or an insect attack. When it's necessary to water, place a straight sided container, such as a coffee can, in the area where you are running your sprinkler. When there is one inch of water in the container it's time to move the sprinkler to another area.

#### **Fertilizing**

The effectiveness of fertilizer application depends on how well it is applied and the condition of your spreader. To avoid streaking, split the total fertilizer need in half. Apply one half up and down the lawn, and then the other half back and forth.

The following are suggested times and fertilizer formulations for lawns in our area. To know exactly what your lawn needs have your soil tested by your County Extension Service.

Fescues

Sept. - Oct. : 11-22-22    Nov. - Dec. : 30-3-15

Ryegrass, All-In-One. Bluegrass

March - May : 30-3-15    Sept. - Oct. : 11-22-22    Nov. - Dec. : 30-3-15

Zoysia, Bentgrass

Mid-May - Mid-July : 30-3-15

Mowing: Recommended Mowing Heights

Spring: 2"-2.5"

Summer: 2.5"-3"

Fall and Winter: 2"-3"

Never remove more than one third of the grass height when you mow. If you "scalp" your lawn you will expose the turfgrass to sun scald. If you mow properly you will not need to rake and remove the clippings. In fact those clippings will break down and provide beneficial nutrients to your lawn, which can reduce the need to fertilize by 25%.

Keep the blades of your mower sharp. You want to cut your grass, not tear it. The higher mowing height for summer will keep the soil line cool and shaded. That will help discourage weed seed germination. The shorter mowing height recommended for the last mowing of the season will help to prevent disease.

#### **Weeds**

First of all there is no such thing as a weed free lawn! There are, however, control measures that can minimize the problem. You will first need to know what type of weeds you are dealing with. There are two categories; broadleaf weeds and annual weeds. They require different controls. When and how they are applied will mean the difference between success and disappointment. For a specific weed problem, bring a sample of the weed or weeds that are giving you a problem to any of our garden stores for identification and suggested treatment.

*Continued on next page ...*



## *Success Tip continued ...*

### **Insects and Diseases**

Some turf problems can be avoided by maintaining good watering and maintenance practices. Lawns that start the season healthy can tolerate some insect problems or a weather induced disease attack. If you find that a problem is escalating, bring a sample, roots and all, of the injury in progress to any one of our garden stores. It is important for the sample to be at least 12"x12" in size. It should be taken from the edge of the problem area so it shows both healthy and damaged grass.

### **Thatch**

If you wait too long and are removing more than one third of the grass blades when you mow, you should remove the clippings from the lawn. If you do not remove them, they can combine with the cuticles of the grass blades and form a layer of thatch. A thatch layer of more than 1/2" will interfere with the absorption of water, fertilizer, pre-emergent weed killers and insecticides. Remove thatch with a hand rake or a power thatcher. It is also possible for soil compaction to cause the same problems. In this case a power core aerator will help. The best time to thatch or aerate is early to mid fall or early spring.

