



Good for Your Lawn, Good for Our Water

What to ask for from your lawn care provider

Fertilizer

- ◇ Take a soil test to determine nutrient needs*
 - N-P-K ratios of 4-0-2 or 4-0-3 work for most Minnesota lawns
- ◇ Irrigated lawns: Apply 1.5-2lb Nitrogen (N) per 1000 sq ft annually (50% slow-release) (1.25-1.75lb for rich soils) (2-2.5lb for sandy soils**)
 - 0.5 - 0.75lb at first mowing***
 - 0.25 - 0.5lb around Memorial Day
 - 0.5-0.75lb around Labor Day
- ◇ Non-irrigated lawns: Apply 0.5-1lb N per 1000 sq ft annually

**Minnesota law requires zero-phosphorus fertilizer unless a soil test shows you need it or you're establishing a new lawn.*
***Sandy soils require more applications with less fertilizer per application to avoid polluting our groundwater.*
****Don't apply fertilizer when soils are less than 50° F.*

Weed Control

- ◇ If needed, apply a preemergent herbicide in the spring for crabgrass (may be combined with spring fertilizer application)
- ◇ Spot treat for broadleaf annual weeds in June
- ◇ Spot treat for broadleaf perennial weeds (dandelions) in fall

**The best defense against weeds is healthy grass*

Core Aeration

- ◇ Compacted soils: Aerate 1 x yearly around Labor Day
 - The goal is 20-40 holes / sq ft, which requires two passes
 - Reassess the need for aeration after 2-3 seasons
- ◇ Non-compacted soils: Aerate 1 x every few years, as needed

Mowing

- ◇ Mow often - mow high
 - Spring & Fall: 2-2.5 inches tall
 - Summer: 3 in. tall
- ◇ Leave clippings on lawn
- ◇ Sweep up clippings on the pavement
- ◇ Mow less frequently or not at all during dry spells

Irrigation

- ◇ Install rain and soil moisture sensors and check them annually
- ◇ Calibrate your system*
 - Spring & Fall: 1/2 in. water, 2 x weekly
 - Summer: 1/4 in. water, 4 x weekly
- ◇ If there's enough rain, don't irrigate
- ◇ Check sprinkler heads annually & fix as needed

**A typical pop-up spray head takes 20min. to apply 1/2 inch of water. A typical rotor-type takes 40min.*

These guidelines are based on recommendations from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota Extension and turf maintenance experts.

Learn more at www.mnwc.org/lawn-care.

