

SUMMER WATERING TIPS

SUMMER 2011

Today's Treatment

Today's Greenskeeper or Plus lawn treatment included complete bio-fertilizer and, weather permitting, broadleaf weed control. Broadleaf weeds, like dandelions, are targeted by our on-the-spot weed control method. Our technicians are armed with specialized spray guns which allow specific, individual weed treatment, greatly reducing the amount of herbicide used. *Please look at your invoice to see if a weed treatment was applied today. If rain during today's treatment prevented the use of herbicide, we will treat for weeds with your next scheduled lawn service.*

Several weeks may pass before the treated weeds turn brown and die. It may be tempting to pull dying weeds but we hope you'll hold tight and wait for the weeds to disappear. If you must yield to the temptation to pull or dig, please try and get all the roots.



Clover is a notoriously difficult weed, but our products do the job!

Summer Care and Watering

There are two major causes of brown areas, and both are related to moisture stress. **The easiest way to diagnose your lawn is to unearth a small portion of turf and inspect the soil underneath.** To check for drought stress, use a small shovel or hand trowel to expose a few inches of soil in a brown area, and compare it to the soil in a green area. If the soil is dry in the brown spots, and moist in the green areas, check the sprinkler coverage (see below), as they may need adjustment or repair. If the sample is from a high-traffic area, chances are that the soil is very compacted, restricting water and nutrient penetration. Compacted turf can be alleviated by aerating, or consider ordering Water-Max turf penetrant treatment to help move water through the soil.



"Sprinkler Shadow" (see darkened grass areas in picture to left) is not uncommon even in lawns with irrigation systems. Sprinkler Shadow is the result of uneven sprinkler coverage. Individual sprinkler spacing and coverage may deliver differing amounts in the same amount of run time. **It's a simple process to determine water output and distribution by using the water gauge we provide, or any flat bottom, straight sided container.** Place gauge(s) or container(s) under

the sprinkler pattern, monitoring to see if there are areas that are lacking in water coverage, then adjust your sprinklers accordingly to insure even coverage. Contact our office for a recommendation for irrigation specialists who can help.

Turf quality is directly linked to available moisture in the root zone (up to 12" deep). Improper watering is the main reason for dry, brown patches in lawns. As a rule, one inch of water each week is adequate for healthy turf. Rocky or sandy soil conditions may require a bit more, but usually 1/2 inch of water every 3-4 days is adequate, as long as the soil stays moist. **Using the process detailed above, place gauges or containers under the sprinkler pattern and record how long it takes to collect 1/2 inch of water. For instance, if it takes an hour to collect 1/2 inch, set your irrigation to run an hour every 3 or 4 days, and you should be supplying adequate water for healthy turf.** If you don't measure the water output, it becomes a guessing game. If you're wrong, drought stressed brown spots may show up.

To identify drought stress early, position yourself with the lawn between you and the sun. Drought stress will show up as dark, smokey green areas that look parched. These areas are only a few hours from turning brown. Another sign of drought stress is when the grass blades don't pop back up after walking over your lawn. Without moisture, the plant stem will not stand back up. You can prevent brown-out by making sure the soil stays moist.

The key to maximizing water efficiency is to keep the soil moist for optimal uptake by the roots. This means watering infrequently, and deeply. Shallow, frequent watering is usually inefficient due to the increased rate of evaporation that takes place. Infrequent watering also encourages surface drying between watering days, minimizing fungus disease potential.

Watering in the early morning is recommended so the grass dries before nightfall. In addition, water pressure is usually better in the early hours, the dew is reclaimed, and the winds are usually calm. **Evening and night watering may invite fungus problems.** But, if it's the only time you can water, please do so!