

SOUTHERN LAWN

TIMES

A monthly E-Newsletter for Father and Son Pest and Lawn Solutions

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What we are doing this month and why.

This month we will continue to apply our **growing season fertilizer formula which contains nitrogen**. Nitrogen encourages growth and green color. This formula also includes phosphorus, potassium and several minor nutrients as well. We are also continuing to apply **pre-emergent weed control** to suppress winter weeds. We will apply **pre-emergent weed control** throughout the year to keep constant pressure on weed populations. We are also applying **post emergent weed control** to control actively growing weeds.

We have begun to see some sodwebworm activity and are now applying **insecticide** with our treatments.

Disease has not been a big issue so far this year due to the moderate levels of rain. We will apply **fungicide** as needed when we notice disease activity occurring.



WHAT IS THE IDEAL HEIGHT TO CUT YOUR GRASS?

Mowing your grass at the ideal height is a key element in keeping it healthy. Different species of grasses thrive at different mowing heights. Cutting the grass too short removes too much leaf area which inhibits photosynthesis, leaving the lawn weak from not being able to manufacture enough carbohydrates from sunlight. Letting the grass grow too long, reduces the lawn's density. As the blades get longer they spread out to let in more light.

Not allowing the lawn to get higher than it should is also an important element in weed control as many weeds do not thrive at the same height as the grass does. These are the ideal mowing heights for the different types of grasses we have in this area.

- **Bermuda 1-2 inches**
- **Centipede and Zoysia 2-2 1/2 inches**
- **St. Augustine 3 inches.**

To make sure your mower is set correctly, park it on a hard surface and measure the distance between the blade and the ground don't just assume the numbers on the mowing height settings mean inches.

HOW WELL DO IRRIGATION SYSTEMS WORK THAT USE RECLAIMED WATER?

Some neighborhoods have reclaimed water available for use in irrigation systems. Reclaimed water is water that is reclaimed from the sewer system but has not been fully purified and is provided to the homeowner at little to no cost. Homes that have reclaimed water available for irrigation have a separate water tap in the front yard that usually has a purple lid to distinguish it from the main water tap.

Using reclaimed water for irrigation has a few drawbacks. The biggest drawback is inconsistency in water pressure. In the heat of the summer, when everyone on the reclaimed system is running their irrigation, the pressure on the system can drop significantly, ultimately causing lawns to become drought stressed and sometimes die from lack of water.

Another drawback is mold can build up in the system from all the impurities and clog irrigation nozzles. And finally, certain chemicals left in the un-purified water can have a negative affect on the health of the lawn.

These problems can be corrected by converting the source of the irrigation water from a reclaimed water tap to an irrigation well and pump. This conversion can usually be done for under \$2,000.00, not cheap except when considering the cost replacing the lawn.



IF YOU WAKE UP ONE MORNING AND YOUR TREE TRUNK IS COVERED IN A WEB...

A relatively uncommon creature, bark lice will occasionally show up on tree trunks and create some concern from their extensive web that can cover most of a tree trunk!

These tiny insects however are harmless to the tree and actually beneficial in some ways. Technically they are not "lice" at all but are only named that because of their size. They are not parasites but feed on fungi, mold and dead plant tissue. At the end of the season, they will even devour their own web leaving no trace they were even there!

Since these insects are not harmful and only feed on what the tree does not use, no treatment is recommended for them.

WATERING INSTRUCTIONS

At the time of this writing, we are forecasted to have typical summer weather with high temperatures in the high 80s with periodic precipitation. Under these conditions, it is appropriate to watering 3-4 times a week and increasing the frequency if the temperature gets warmer and/or we enter a dryer weather pattern. Always apply 30-45 minutes of water per zone when irrigating.

The ideal time of day to water is in the early morning hours, while the dew is still on the ground. This is generally between midnight and 8 AM. The advantage of watering during this time is 1. You are not extending the number of hours during the day the grass is wet there by encouraging disease activity. 2. Less water is lost to evaporation. 3. There is less wind during the night to blow the spray pattern off target.

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