

: : SOUTHERN LAWN TIMES



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

July 2024

What we are doing this month and why

This month we will continue to apply our warm season fertilizer formula that contains nitrogen. Nitrogen encourages top growth and green color. In addition to nitrogen, this formula also contains phosphorus and potassium as well as many minor nutrients the grass needs to be healthy! We are also continuing to apply pre-emergent weed control to suppress 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 are continuing to see some sod webworm activity so we are adding insecticide to our treatment formula.

Disease is most active between 70° and 80°. We are past that window now but will continue to keep a close eye out for disease activity and apply fungicide as needed when we notice disease activity occurring.

WHAT IS THIS MOSS STUFF TAKING OVER MY YARD AND HOW DO I TREAT IT?

Ground moss usually appears on areas that have poor growing conditions for any other plants. This would include poor drainage, limited sunlight, acidic soil or infertile soil. The moss is not the problem but a symptom of the afore mentioned problems. The moss can be killed with a fungicide that has copper sulfate in it.

However if you do not correct whatever issues are preventing other plants (like grass) from growing there, the area will stay barren and the moss will eventually return.



WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF A HEALTHY LAWN?

This may seem like an obvious question, however if you have the wrong concept of what a "healthy" lawn should be like, you may be led to over maintain and eventually kill your lawn.

We often see fertilizer ads promoting the application of their products for a "thicker greener lawn".

That would lead one to believe that the thicker and greener your lawn is, the better...and that's just not true!

Some of the grasses we grow in this area, like centipede, are naturally pale green.

Turning them dark green with the application of too much fertilizer is unhealthy for centipede and will cause it to eventually decline.

It is also unhealthy for the lawn to become too dense. When over fertilized, the lawn becomes "top heavy" with more foliage than the roots can support and eventually declines.

So, when assessing the health of your lawn, "thick and green" are not necessarily the determining factors. The lawn should be moderately dense but not "spongy", not in a state of decline and relatively free of weeds and pest activity.

HOW TO SET A PIN AND DIAL SPRINKLER TIMER

If you have never had a sprinkler system to maintain, setting the timer can be a little confusing.

A "pin and dial" timer has two dials, a large one and a small one. The small one determines which days the system comes on and has 14 pins which represent 2 weeks of settings.

If the pin is pushed in, the system will come on that day. If the pin is pulled out, the system will not come on. (Note: timers that have metal pins instead of plastic are the opposite.

Pull the pin out to water and push in to skip that day.) The large dial determines what time of day and for how long each zone comes on by the placement of pegs on the dial. Each peg represents 15 minutes of run time. So for instance, 3 pegs = 45 minutes.

There should be a space between each group of pegs for every zone of the system.

The timer in the picture is a five zone system set to come on at 2:00 A.M. and run 45 minutes on the first two zones and 30 minutes on the other three zones. The small dial is set so the system comes on one day and the skips two days.

WATERING INSTRUCTIONS

At the time of this writing, we are in a dry weather pattern with warm temperatures, high pressure, low humidity and no significant rain in the forecast. Under these conditions, most lawns will require irrigating **4 to 5 times per week** to stay out of drought stress. The best time of day to apply irrigation is while the dew is still on the ground, **between midnight and 8 AM**. This way, you're not extending the number of hours in the day the grass is wet. The longer the grass is wet, the more likely disease activity will occur.