



Father and Son Pest and Lawn Solutions

NEWSLETTER

January 2025

WATERING INSTRUCTIONS

Cooler temperatures combined with the shorter days this time of year greatly reduced water requirements for grass. Therefore we recommend shutting off irrigation systems now until next spring. Allowing the system to continue to run through the winter is unnecessary and increases the likelihood of disease activity.



What we are doing this month and why.

This month we will continue applying our fall/winter season fertilizer formula which contains potassium. **Potassium** encourages the grass to store carbohydrates in its root system. This stored energy will be used next spring when it comes out of dormancy. 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.

Mole crickets are the only turf destroying insect that remains active through the winter. However, the colder it gets the less active they become. We will treat them as needed.

Disease is most active between 70° and 80°. We are fluctuating back and forth around that temperature window so we will keep a close eye out for disease activity and apply **fungicide** as needed when we notice disease activity occurring.



WILL SOD THAT IS LAID IN BARE AREAS EVENTUALLY BLEND IN WITH THE REST OF THE LAWN?

Many times, part of your lawn may decline for various reasons and instead of waiting for it to recover, you may want to sod those specific areas. How well will the new sod blend in with the existing lawn? These are pictures of an area in my own lawn that had declined from tree root competition. I top dressed the area with some sand and then placed the sod on top of the sand. These pictures are of the same area taken about year apart. You can see how the new grass blended in quite well.

SHOULD I RAKE THE DEAD GRASS OUT OF MY LAWN RIGHT NOW?

The brown grass that you see in your lawn right now is the grass blades that have died off for the winter.

Trying to rake them out will not benefit the lawn in any way and the raking activity may pull up good runners that will produce new grass blades next spring. The dead grass blades also create a layer of insulation, protecting the runners from freeze damage in the event of a hard freeze! It's best at this time to leave the lawn alone. If the lawn has too much thatch, (thatch is created by built up layers of runners not grass blades), wait until late April or May before attempting to remove the excess runners by dethatching the lawn. By that time, it will be actively growing and can quickly recover from the dethatching operation.



WHAT TYPE OF GRASS GROWS BEST IN THE SHADE?

Out of the varieties of warm season turf grasses we grow here along the Emerald Coast, the two varieties that are the most shade tolerant are St. Augustine and zoysia. Both St. Augustine and zoysia have about the same shade tolerance. However it is important to understand that neither are "shade proof" and still require at least 6 hrs of daylight to become established and thrive. Newly planted sod requires even more sunlight than established grass because the grass requires additional sunlight to produce the energy to develop a new root system after being planted. Therefore newly planted sod in a predominantly shady area, may struggle to survive where established grass grows well. Newly planted sod requires even more sunlight than established grass because the grass requires additional sunlight to produce the energy to develop a new root system after being planted. Therefore newly planted sod in a predominantly shady area, may struggle to survive where established grass grows well.

WHY DOES THE GRASS NOT GROW ON A CERTAIN SIDE OF MY HOUSE?

Many people have at least one side of their home where the grass does not grow well or even at all. Most of the time, fences that run along property lines create a narrow corridor as they run beside the house. This limits the amount of direct sunlight that reaches grass growing between the fence and the house, causing the grass to decline. Even without a fence, the first few feet of the ground from the foundation of the home on the north side is usually constantly shaded making the north side of a home a difficult area to grow grass. In these areas that are constantly shaded, it is better to install rock, shrubs or a shade tolerant ground cover rather than trying to grow grass.



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