



### WATERING INSTRUCTIONS

We recommend irrigating two or three times a week right now and increasing the frequency as needed, based on the amount of precipitation we get and the temperature. Applying 1/2 inch of water during each irrigation cycle is recommended and most irrigation systems will do this if set to run for 45 minutes per zone. The best time to water your lawn is early morning when the dew is on the ground. Watering this time of day doesn't increase the number of hours the grass is wet in a day, reducing the likelihood of disease. Also, there is less evaporation of the irrigation water, so more water penetrates the soil and there is less wind which can blow the irrigation stream off course.



### WHAT IS THE BEST TYPE OF GRASS?

I get asked this question frequently. There really isn't a single "best" type of grass. All types of grass have their strengths and weaknesses. It really depends on the environment, how you are going to use the grass and how much maintenance you want to put into it. Here are some of the main strengths and weaknesses of the different types of grass that grow along the Emerald Coast.

#### CENTIPEDE

- Strength: Low maintenance, requires little fertilizer.
- Weakness: Even when maintained properly it doesn't create a lush lawn. Excessive watering & fertilizing can stress the grass & cause it to decline and die.

#### ST. AUGUSTINE

- Strengths: The most shade tolerant of all warm season grasses.
- Weaknesses: Chinch bugs and not traffic tolerant.

#### BERMUDA

- Strengths: Very durable, traffic and drought tolerant.
- Weakness: Not shade tolerant, needs lots of sun.

#### ZOYSIA

- Strength: Creates lush thick lawn that does a great job out competing weeds.
- Weaknesses: Slow growing, slow to recover from problems. Invasive growth into surrounding
- planting beds.

#### BAHIA

- Strengths: Low maintenance, drought tolerant.
- Weaknesses: Doesn't grow very dense or create a lush lawn, mainly used as a pasture grass.

### HOW TO DEAL WITH ARMADILLOS IN YOUR LAWN



Armadillos are native to the Americas and have been here long before humans arrived. They become a nuisance to home owners when they dig for food in manicured lawns. Armadillos are nocturnal animals and their activity looks like someone used a claw hammer to pull up chunks of grass in a lawn. Lawns that are affected by armadillos usually boarder natural areas where the armadillo has a den. Armadillos feed on a variety of insects and invertebrates. Treating the lawn with insecticide to eliminate the food source is not practical since it is impossible

to eradicate all the insects in the soil (and even if it were possible, it would be irresponsible since the majority of soil insects are beneficial). The only way to deal with armadillos is to trap them. In spite of the fact that armadillos have a highly developed sense of smell, no one has ever discovered an attractant that works on armadillos. Consequently, they must be funneled into a trap. A funnel can be constructed out of 10 foot long 2x10s placed on edge. First, try to identify the point of entry the armadillo is using to enter the lawn from the adjacent natural area. Place the wide end of the funnel there and a live animal trap at the small end of the funnel. It may take repositioning the trap a number of times and a lot of patience to finally catch it.

### 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.

### WHAT WE ARE DOING THIS MONTH & WHY?



This month we are beginning to apply our spring and summer fertilizer formula. This formula contains nitrogen. Nitrogen is the primary nutrient that encourages the lawn to produce top growth. We are also continuing to apply pre-emergent weed control to suppress weeds. We 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 damaging insect that is active at this time. We will monitor and treat mole crickets as needed. Disease activity can be an issue as long as temperatures are in the 70 - 80 degree range, especially in St. Augustine and we will continue to watch for it and apply fungicide as needed.

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