



WATERING INSTRUCTIONS

The weather has been fluctuating over the past month. We were in a drought and now it seems we're getting more consistent rain. At this time, we recommend irrigating three or four times a week. If the frequency of rain decreases again, increase the frequency as needed. 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.



WHEN SHOULD I AERATE MY LAWN?

Aeration is the process of pulling small cores of soil, about the size of your finger, out of the lawn. This loosens the soil, allowing it to better absorb oxygen, water and nutrients. Aeration is never a bad thing to do, however there are certain conditions in which it is more beneficial. Lawns with a lot of tree root competition will benefit from frequent aeration. Also, lawns that have heavy traffic will benefit from aeration. Aerators can be rented from most local rental stores or some landscape companies offer the service. The best time of year to aerate is during the growing season between May and September so the grass will recover from the aeration before it goes dormant. If you chose to aerate your lawn yourself, first mark all sprinkler heads to avoid running over them with the aerator and damaging them. Then run the aerator back and forth in one direction over the entire lawn, then back and forth over the lawn at 90 degrees to the first direction so you end up with a checkerboard pattern. After the aeration, run through the sprinkler system again to make sure no heads were accidentally damaged or any shallow irrigation pipes were punctured. Lawns with a lot of tree root competition or heavy traffic can benefit from 3-4 aerations a year.

THE MAGIC CURE FOR MANY LAWN PROBLEMS!



There are few things that can be done to your lawn that will give it the extraordinary benefits spreading a light layer of sand over the top will give it! These pictures were taken exactly 3 months apart! You can see the dramatic results! Spreading a thin layer of sand over the top of the grass has the following benefits:

- Reduces thatch.
- Reduces root competition from surrounding trees.
- Invigorates the grass to produce new growth.
- Fills in dips and holes in the lawn.

Top dressing a lawn is not complicated, it just takes a lot of work! Start by having a load of sand delivered to your property. If possible, have it dumped in a place where it will not be in the way of anything while you work on the yard. Depending on the size of your yard, the top dressing procedure may take you several days. Distribute the sand in small piles over the yard using a wheel borrow and spread the piles with a garden rake or landscape rake so that the tips of the grass are barely poking through. If this is done early enough in the growing season, the grass will grow completely up through the top dressing well before it goes dormant in the fall.

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 grass 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

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.

WHAT WE ARE DOING THIS MONTH & WHY?



This month we continue applying 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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