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# Lawn Care



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# Lawn Care

## Soil Test

Whether seeding a new lawn or working on an established lawn a soil test is a must. The only way to determine what is needed for your lawn's condition is a test. This will save time, money, and energy.

## Seed Type

Fescue varieties of seed are the best for home use. They use less water, fertilization, and require less maintenance. The basic types of fescues are Tall and Fine Leaf; Creeping Red, Chewings, Sheep, and Hard. A combination of tall and fine-leaf fescues is best.

## Watering

Water only when absolutely needed. The fescues do not require as much supplemental water as the other lawn grasses. When needed deep watering is better than frequent light watering because it will encourage deep root growth. Usually one inch of water per week is sufficient.



## Fertilize

Fertilize only if needed. Choose slow-release and/or organic formulations. With clippings returned, most lawns will not need more than 2 lbs. N/1,000 square feet per season. Apply no more than 1 pound nitrogen/1,000 square feet at any one time—1 pound in the spring and one pound in the fall should be sufficient under most conditions. For fall fertilization, apply no later than October 15<sup>th</sup>. Fertilizing after this date increases the chances of nutrient loss that could cause a pollution problem.

Any fertilizer that falls on a hard surface such as the driveway or walkway should be brushed into the lawn or swept up and applied back onto the lawn. If left on a hard surface the fertilizer can easily make its way into water sheds via the public drain system.



## Mowing

Grass should be mowed the height of two to three inches. Mowing at this height will: foster deeper root growth, discourage weed growth, and reduce evaporation; thereby, requiring less watering.

Mower blades should be kept sharp. Dull blades tear the leaf blades instead of cutting them. A dull blade can stunt leaf blade growth, and makes the grass susceptible to disease and reduces visual quality.

Frequent cutting will tend to remove no more than one third of the length of the grass blade. Removal of more than one third of the leaf blade causes scalping.

## Clippings

If a lawn is mowed frequently so there are no large clumps of grass, the clippings should remain on the lawn. They will break down in three to four weeks adding a natural source of nutrients to the lawn. Because the clippings break down, there is no problem with thatch build up.

