

“Solutions for a happier lawn and garden”



KICK OFF YOUR SHOES (Summer Lawn Care)

Summer is the best time to run barefoot through the grass. Who wants to wear shoes this time of the year? Step your bare tootsies onto the lawn and run free. I try and go shoeless as often as possible in the summer. The problem I encounter when walking free is that I can't help but to pause at every weed, investigate for insects, and scout for crabgrass. Oh well, I am a lawn nerd. What can I say?! I find them interesting. It is pretty amazing that we can grow these “crops” of grass in so many different conditions. Lawns are the anchors of our yards. They frame our homes and garden beds and provide recreation areas for our families.

Summer is a time to have fun but hopefully not at the expense of our lawns. Don't forget about that green carpet under your bare toes. It serves you well. Give it a little TLC. Here's what we can do this time of the year:

*Water if you can. Your lawn needs a minimum of 1 inch of water per week. If Mother Nature does not provide this, it's time for you to step up with those bare feet and set up some sprinklers. Buy a simple rain gauge to measure how much water your lawn is getting per week or set up an empty tuna can to capture the water. It is really important to give your lawn a deep, root soaking. Instead of watering daily for a short period of time, I would much rather that you water 2 to 3 times per week for a much longer time. Most people set their sprinklers to run 20 minutes per day. Change this up and go every other day for a minimum of an hour. This way, water will seep deeper into the soil, encouraging deeper grass root growth. Water in the early part of the day to avoid water evaporation and disease promotion caused by late day watering.

*Let your lawn go dormant if you can't water. Lawns have an amazing survival instinct to shut down and go dormant in the heat and drought of summer. The bad news is, our lawns are brown and crunchy during this time period. The good news is, they usually recover once the cooler weather of September returns. Trying to get a sleeping summer lawn to wake up with just a little bit of water in the heat, is not the best idea. It will wake up grumpy.

*Mow your lawn high. The taller your grass blades are, the softer, cool grass you have to run your toes through and the better the chances of your lawn's survival. A taller grass blade has more surface area and provides more shade for the grass below, therefore, the ability to retain moisture is better.

*Let the clippings fall. Grass is made up of approximately 80% water. If you leave the clippings on the lawn, they give back moisture and act as a “green” fertilizer providing a gentle Nitrogen feed for your lawn.





*Keep your blades sharp. Believe it or not, the sharper your mower blades, the softer the grass will be on your summer feet. Grass that is rag tag from dull mower blades is more vulnerable to diseases and drying out.

*1/3rd at a time. Don't mow off more than a third of a grass blade at a time. If you mow off more, you will stress out your lawn, making it much more susceptible to burn out.

*Treat for grubs. Now is the time to apply Bayer's Season Long Grub Control. This is no joke folks. Pretty soon grubs will be hatching and lurking beneath your feet, eating the roots of your lovely lawn. Don't wait. Apply Bayer's Season Long Grub Control through mid-August. Be sure to water it in or apply before a heavy rainfall. The more rain it gets, the better it works.

*Bring out the post-emergent weed controls. Pay attention to new weeds popping up and nasty crabgrass and Nutsedge. Crabgrass loves the heat and is one of the greatest summer bullies in the lawn. Use a liquid broadleaf weed control such as; Ortho's Weed-B-Gon plus Crabgrass Control. Use Nutsedge Killer by Ortho to control that nuisance Nutsedge. It is best to use these products when temperatures are below 85 degrees.

*Give your lawn, a non-burning summer treat. Milorganite is one of my favorite products. It is organic, non-burning, and has Iron for quick green-up. Espoma makes a nice, organic Summer Revitalizer that is perfect for this summer heat. Encap's Fast Acting Iron is great at putting the green back into your summer lawn.

Everybody, kick of your shoes, run barefoot through your lawn, do cartwheels, have a picnic, play ball, etc. Be sure to thank your lawn for all it does for you and your family. It provides you with a fun place to play, a perfect backdrop for your garden, and a lot of oxygen to run around.

Come see us at Van Wilgen's. We would love to help!

Thanks a bunch...Stacey



Van Wilgen's

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