

Fall Lawn Care

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Without actually taking the time and looking back, it sure seems like just about every article this year has started by commenting on what a wet and cool summer we've had so I suppose there's not a reason to change that today. We've experienced more fungal diseases and root damage by water than we've had in a long time, but our lawns have sure benefited and if you're thinking of taking your lawn to the next level, this is the perfect season to start that process.



First, make sure your lawn is still getting an inch of water weekly, either by rain or sprinklers. Continue this until we get our first hard frost of the year. Last week winterizer lawn fertilization was mentioned and we're still a few weeks away from needing to do that. But depending on how many weeds are in your lawn right now, it might be a great time to prepare for an application of a broad leaf herbicide especially to areas of your lawn infested with perennial weeds. Leaves are starting to change color which is caused by the plant shuffling resources from it's leaves to it's roots; as certain materials are removed from the leaves, they start to show a different color. That directional motion to the roots raises the efficacy of the herbicide thereby giving you a better kill.

If you have so many weeds that if they weren't there'd be just dirt, absolutely now is the time to apply herbicide. Then after the label listed re-entry time has expired, you can go back in and throw down some grass seeds – called overseeding. Broad leaf herbicides will have absolutely no effect on grass seed either before or after germinating. Then after overseeding go over the areas with a rake or broom and try to get the seeds all the way to the ground where they can germinate. The dying weeds will create good cover for the emerging grass seeds protecting them from birds and even light frosts. Started now the grass seedlings will have more than a few weeks to establish good roots before the growing season comes to a close.

Aeration is a very good task to put on your fall schedule as well, especially if you can get it done before your winterizer fertilizing. Aeration is usually done with a core aerator, either as a stand-alone machine or hitched up to a mower or tiller. This shouldn't need to be done every year but the effect of loosening up the soil, especially combined with fertilization, will be very noticeable in the spring.

So now you have a list of tasks that completed this fall will make your spring lawn great and easier to keep looking great. Herbicide the broadleaf perennial weeds, overseed and work in the grass seeds especially in bare and sparse areas, aeration, and in a couple of weeks winterizer lawn fertilization. If this seems too daunting, hire a lawn care professional to do the jobs for you. It will not disappoint!

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