

GREAT LAKES GROUNDS

Lawn & Landscapes. Simplified.

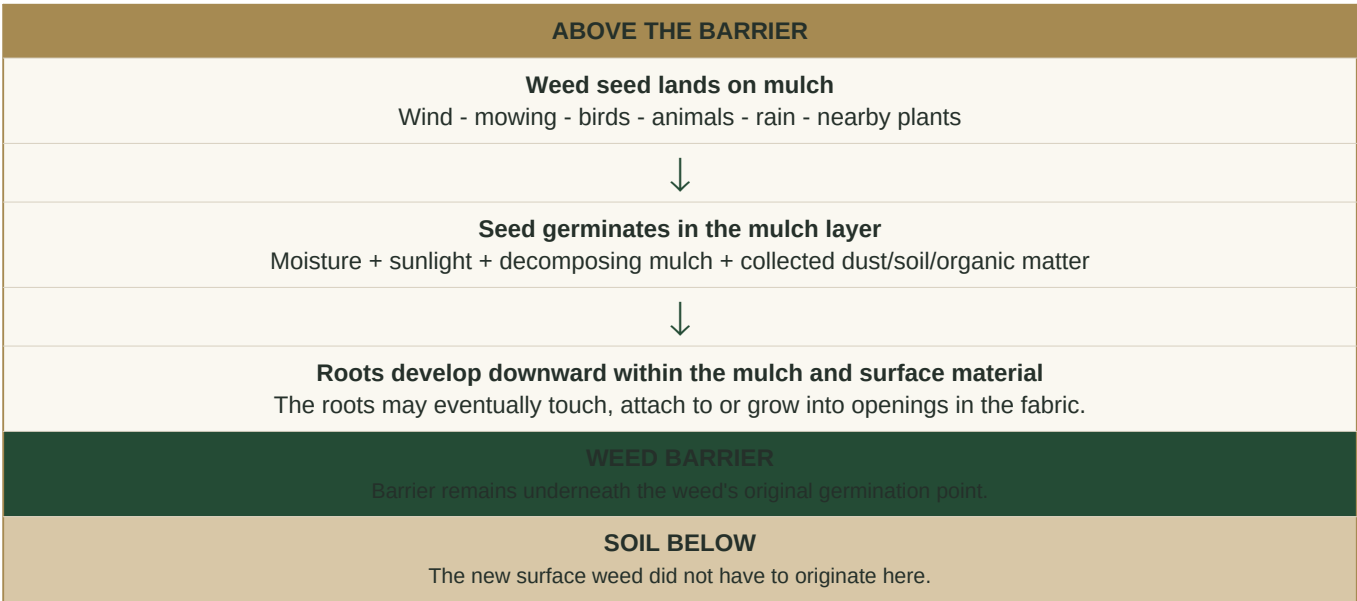
WHY WEEDS GROW IN MULCH ABOVE WEED BARRIER

When weeds appear in a mulched landscape bed, it can look as though they grew from the soil, pushed through the weed barrier, and then came up through the mulch. In many cases, that is not what happened. The weed actually started from a seed that landed on top of the barrier and germinated inside the mulch layer.

Where the new weed seeds come from

MOWING & LAWN EQUIPMENT	Mowers, string trimmers and blowers can move grass, weed seeds and small plant material from lawns into nearby landscape beds.
WIND	Lightweight weed seeds can travel through the air from neighboring lawns, fields, roadsides and other landscape beds before settling on top of the mulch.
BIRDS & ANIMALS	Birds and other animals can carry or deposit seeds into beds through droppings, fur, feet or normal movement through the landscape.
RAIN & WATER MOVEMENT	Rain, runoff and splashing water can move seeds and small soil particles into the mulch layer.
FALLING PLANT MATERIAL	Nearby weeds, flowers, trees and shrubs naturally release seeds that may fall directly into the bed.

How a weed can grow without starting underneath the barrier



Why mulch can support weed germination

Fresh mulch is intended to suppress weeds, but organic mulch naturally changes over time. As it decomposes, and as dust, fine soil, grass clippings, leaves and other organic debris collect on top, the upper mulch layer can begin to act like a shallow growing medium. If a weed seed lands there and receives enough moisture and light, it can germinate **above** the weed barrier.

What the weed barrier is actually doing

Landscape fabric is primarily designed to help suppress weeds and dormant seeds located in the native soil **underneath** the fabric. It separates that soil from the mulch and limits light reaching the soil below. However, no weed barrier can stop new seeds from arriving from above. This is why a properly installed barrier can still have weeds growing in the mulch on top of it.

IMPORTANT: Finding a weed above landscape fabric does not automatically mean the weed grew up through the fabric or that the barrier failed. If the seed germinated in the mulch layer, the entire weed began above the barrier. Its roots may later grow downward and make it appear that the plant originated underneath.

Routine weed maintenance is still necessary. Mulch and weed barrier greatly reduce weed pressure, but no landscape bed is permanently weed-proof. Removing surface weeds while they are young helps prevent deep rooting and additional seed production.

Great Lakes Grounds, LLC

Proudly serving all of Genesee County

(810) 214-0999 | www.greatlakesgrounds.com | greatlakesgroundsinfo@gmail.com