



HOME & GARDEN

Home and Garden information center • 12005 Homewood Road • Ellicott City, MD 21042 • 1-800-342-2507

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Lawn Tips

- Early spring seeding will help give your new grass a head start on weeds. Late February through the end of March is the second best time to over-seed your lawn to make it thicker or cover bare areas. The best time is late August through October. Remove leaves and other debris and rake the soil or rent an aerator or vertical mower to ensure good seed-soil contact. Follow the label for seeding rates.
- It is not a good idea to apply fertilizer to cool season turf in the spring unless your turf is weak and thin or if you did not fertilize this past fall. Fertilizing in the spring encourages rapid succulent growth that is more susceptible to attack by insects and disease. This is a good time to have your soil tested. Keeping the soil pH in the 6.0 - 7.0 range is very important in maintaining healthy turf. A soil test will determine its pH and the amount of lime needed. Agricultural limestone (ground or dolomitic) can be applied to raise soil pH. Pelletized lime is slightly more expensive than ground limestone but is easier to apply.
- If you had a crabgrass problem last year consider applying a pre-emergent herbicide. If you are also re-seeding, be sure to select an herbicide labeled for use on new lawns, it can be found under the trade name Siduron or the chemical name, tupersan. Best control is achieved by splitting this herbicide treatment into two applications. Apply the first application of pre-emergent crabgrass killer in mid-March in Southern Maryland and on the Eastern Shore, in late March for Central Maryland and in early April in Western Maryland. Apply the second half in early May for Southern Maryland, mid-May for central Maryland and late May for western Maryland.
- Chickweed, dead nettle, henbit and other broadleaf winter annual weeds are starting to grow again at this time. They actually germinated last fall and were dormant throughout the winter. They can be treated with a labeled broadleaf weed herbicide when they are more actively growing later this month or throughout April. Small infestations can be pulled by hand. However, fall herbicide applications when these weeds are germinating often produce better control, the product Gallery can be found incorporated in some fertilizer formulations, it will also prevent dandelions from germinating, its best to make the application about the third week in September.
- Lawn areas plagued by compacted soil should not be aerated during wet spring conditions. Digging or disturbing the soil when it is wet actually results in more compaction. Wait until the ground dries out.
- Pick up and discard dog droppings from turf areas. The droppings will burn grass plants if left for an extended period of time.
- This is the time to sharpen your lawn mower blades and service your mower. Dull blades tear turfgrass and can lead to disease problems. Remember to sharpen your mower blade a few times throughout the mowing season.

Have a pest or gardening question?

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