

Spring Lawn Maintenance

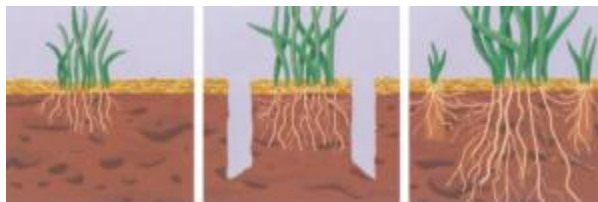
(modified from <http://www.classenturfcare.com/turf-care-101/>)

Aeration

WHAT IS AERATION?

Technically speaking, aeration is the naturally occurring process of air exchange between the soil and its surrounding atmosphere. Practically speaking, aeration is the process of mechanically removing small plugs of thatch and soil from the lawn to improve natural soil aeration.

AERATION BENEFITS:



Aeration can help make your lawn healthier and reduce its maintenance requirements through these means:

- Improved air exchange between the soil and atmosphere.
- Enhanced soil water uptake.
- Improved fertilizer uptake and use.
- Reduced water runoff and puddling.
- Stronger roots.
- Reduced soil compaction.
- Enhanced heat and drought stress tolerance.
- Improved resiliency and cushioning.
- Enhanced thatch breakdown.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD YOU AERATE?

Most lawns benefit from annual aeration. Heavily used lawns, or those growing on heavy clay or subsoils may need more than one aeration each year. Again, turf responds best when tine spacing is closer and penetration is deeper.

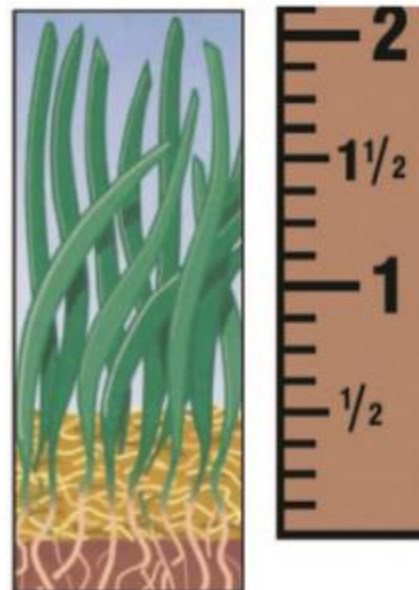
Dethatching

WHAT IS THATCH?

Thatch is dead grass, roots and other matter that builds up in grass over time. It's very common and collects on most lawns at some time or another. Thatch collects above the soil at surface level and becomes intertwined in grass stems. When the cycle of decomposition is delayed for any variety of reasons, dead matter will begin to build up. As the buildup increases the matter becomes stacked and then packs down or mattes, causing healthy grass blades to become stressed and weaken.

WHY DETHATCH?

Left untreated, thatch can literally choke a lawn to death. As thatch thickens it robs the soil of air and hinders water absorption and nutrient penetration to the soil and root system. Not only will excessive thatch kill the grass, left undeterred long enough it will damage the soil so that even if removed, new growth in that area will be sparse at best without soil treatment. Thick thatch levels can also become a haven for insects. Moisture rich matted thatch can be an excellent breeding ground for mosquitos and disease. Knowing the level of thatch you have will assist you in the best way to combat the problem properly.



HOW OFTEN TO DETHATCH?

Dethatching can be performed any time during the year outside of drought or frost. Don't wait for the fall to perform a dethatching treatment at a moderate or excessive level of thatch unless you are in a prolonged season of drought. Thatch creates a water barrier, prevents new grass from growing and harbors insects. It collects quickly and before long the lawn and its entire root system is at risk. Lawn dethatching, when performed as needed, will go a long way in maintaining a healthy, green lawn.

Fertilizing after Aeration and Dethatching

Within 48 hours after you aerate; fertilize, and water your lawn. The fertilizer and water will have the best chance to get down into the holes made by the aerator if applied soon after aeration. If you plan on doing this, make sure you use a starter fertilizer that's appropriate for your grass and growing conditions that does not contain any weed control. If the fertilizer contains weed control, your grass seed won't germinate properly.

Revive Granular

Revive is an organic-based soil treatment made from a combination of soil wetting agents, natural organic lignosulfonates and iron. Revive allows water to penetrate deeper into hard-to-wet soils, even through thatch and mat. Revive helps save water and solves problems associated with hard, dry, compact soils and the additional iron helps thicken and turn your lawn dark green.

Granular Revive is made with DPW (Dehydrated Poultry Waste) containing primary plant foods that have a low burn potential. The result is a slow-release, non-burning organic-based fertilizer that saves water.

- Conserves water during times of drought, severe heat and watering restrictions by wetting the soil deeper allowing your lawn to store more water between irrigations.
- Makes better use of water as it penetrates deeper into the soil, runs off less on slopes, and reduces evaporation.
- Moves fertilizer deeper into the roots, while providing supplemental iron.
- Assists in breaking up and loosening compacted soil by promoting root activity.
- Helps eliminate dry brown spots and turn lawns green.

Revive RTU Spray

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What Revive Does

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Earth Essentials Cow & Compost

Excellent source of Nitrogen and Organic Matter
Use only every 2-3 years

Soil Sulfur

Helps create acid soil conditions and also acts as a soil conditioner. Helps lower pH in excessively alkaline soils. Is slow acting but long lasting.

How to Care for Garden Tools

(adapted from <http://www.bhg.com/gardening/yard/tools/how-to-care-for-garden-tools/>)

Properly caring for your tools will ensure that you enjoy gardening with them for many seasons to come.

After the last leaf is raked and the final bulb is planted, it's time to settle your tools in for a long winter nap. To keep your tool blades sparkly and free of dust during hibernation, all you'll need is a little sand and oil. Follow these three easy steps to ensure your treasured tools will be in great shape for another season working the soil.

Instructions:

STEP 1

1. Fill an old pot or bucket (large enough to hold all of your metal-blade tools) with dry sand. Mix lubricating oil such as Linseed or vegetable oil with the sand until it is thoroughly moist. Gather your tools and use a putty knife or steel-wool scrubbing pad to remove large clumps of caked mud from the blades.

STEP 2

2. Plunge your hoes, shovels, trowels, forks, and metal dibblers into the sandy mix. Place the pot or bucket containing the tools in a cool, dry place for storage and let the mix do its work. Keep wooden tool handles from splitting and drying out during months by rubbing them with linseed oil before storage.