



FALL

**LANDSCAPE SOLUTIONS**  
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## QUICK TIPS FOR FALL

- Spring bulbs will need time to get their roots established this fall, so if you're going to plant them, the sooner the better.
- Consider setting up bird feeding stations. The birds will appreciate your efforts, and their visits will liven up your landscape through the colder months.
- Removing fallen leaves, branches and other debris this fall will make a big difference in your lawn. And by mowing your lawn shorter for the final cut of the season, you'll help it to retain better color throughout the winter.
- Applying mulch to your planting beds will keep soil temperatures more steady and help the soil to retain moisture. It looks good too!



# For a Lawn that Looks Great, Aerate! Aerate! Aerate!

## GET BIG-TIME BENEFITS FROM THIS VALUABLE SERVICE

We've said it before and we'll say it again... aeration is one of the best things that can be done for your lawn. With this process, a core aerator makes thousands of holes in your turf by removing plugs of soil that are left behind to dissolve.

"So," you may be asking yourself, "why would poking holes in my turf be beneficial?"

### HERE ARE THREE REASONS:

1. Consider the way your lawn's root system works. It constantly renews itself by sending out new roots that need loose and open soil to expand. If soil is heavy and compacted, the new roots are forced to stay near the surface or even in the thatch layer itself. This leads to a lawn that dries out too quickly and builds up thatch faster than a deeply rooted lawn.

Aeration creates the growth zones that new roots need to expand. Since root development is much greater in the fall than at any other time of year, this is an ideal time to aerate.

2. Another big benefit of aeration is thatch control. Thatch is the layer of living and dead stems, roots and other grass parts that sits just above the soil. When it exceeds 1/2" in thickness, it becomes a breeding ground for all sorts of lawn diseases and insects. It's very difficult to grow healthy turf through a heavy thatch layer.

After aeration, the soil plugs dissolve back into the lawn during rainfall or watering. This helps to speed up the natural decomposition of thatch. By decreasing thatch on a regular basis with aeration, it may be possible to prevent the need for extensive lawn renovations down the road.

3. Last but not least, the holes created by aeration make it much easier for air, water and nutrients to reach your lawn's root zone. This leads to a stronger root system with an improvement in overall plant health and appearance.

So why wait? Do your lawn a favor this fall and Aerate! Aerate! Aerate!



### KEY POINTS

- Aeration is one of the best things that can be done for your lawn.
- Performed regularly, this service encourages root development, breaks up the thatch layer, and makes it easier for air, water and nutrients to reach the root zone.



## INSECT ALERT: SOD WEBWORMS

Sod webworms are moth larvae that feed on the leaves and stems of grass plants. Gray or light-brown with black spots, they get their name from the silken tunnels they spin in the lawn's thatch layer. Birds foraging in your lawn may indicate that sod webworms (or other insects) are present.

Two to three generations of sod webworms can hatch per year. When there are 15 or more per square yard, damage begins appearing in the form of large, patchy areas of grass that turn brown and die.



*Preventing sod webworms is a matter of maintenance.*

While insecticides can be used for sod webworm control, it's best to try and prevent these pests in the first place. You can do this by keeping your turf as healthy as possible with regular maintenance. This includes proper watering, aerating, dethatching and sticking to a balanced fertilization program.

The healthier your lawn, the less likely it will be to fall victim to these hungry moth larvae!

# Feed the Machine

## FERTILIZER DOES ITS BEST WORK IN THE FALL

Your lawn, trees and shrubs are constantly absorbing nutrients in order to keep growing. During the spring and summer, these nutrients are converted into food that is used for top growth. In the fall, however, top growth slows down and the focus shifts underground to the root system.

At this point, plants begin expanding their root systems and filling them with nutrient reserves to



*Your plants are counting on you for a heavy fall feeding.*

carry them over through the winter season. The more the roots are able to stow away, the better growth you can expect when spring returns. You can help this process along with a heavy application of fertilizer in the fall.

The basic ingredients in fertilizer are nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. Nitrogen promotes color and top growth, phosphorus stimulates root development, and potassium helps plants to resist disease and conserve water.

A heavy application of these nutrients in the fall will give your lawn, trees and shrubs the raw materials they need for extensive new root growth. This root expansion is the foundation upon which your landscape plants will grow next year.

## BESIDES EXPANDING THE ROOT SYSTEM, HEAVY FALL FEEDING CAN:

- Increase resistance to disease by promoting better overall plant health.
- Improve winter color of both turf and evergreens.

### KEY POINTS

- Plants shift gears in the fall and focus their energy on expanding their root systems.
- A heavy dose of fertilizer this fall will help your lawn, trees and shrubs build up nutrient reserves for the winter season.
- Improved looks and health in the spring can be expected.

- Increase water-holding ability, which can decrease the effects of winter winds that normally dry plants and cause browning of leaves and blades.
- Encourage better blooming of flowering trees and shrubs and improved density in your lawn.

When it comes to fertilization, there's no time like the present. You'll definitely notice a difference when spring returns!

## GOT AN ORANGE IT MUST BE

Rust disease is spread by fungus spores that travel by air, water, shoes and lawn equipment. Kentucky bluegrass, perennial ryegrass and tall fescue are all susceptible. Once infected, lawns are weakened and made more vulnerable to other potential problems.

### SYMPTOMS

The most obvious symptom of rust disease is an orange or yellowish-orange powder on grass blades. Infected lawns may take on a yellow, red or brown appearance overall. This disease is very common in the fall when temperatures, rainfall and humidity favor the development of fungus spores.

### CAUSES

Lawns that are shady, excessively dry, mowed very short or have poor circulation are especially prone to developing rust disease. In addition, low levels of nitrogen in the soil can make it easier for rust disease to get established.

## Make a Difference...Plant a Tree!



*Tree planting is a great way to improve environmental quality while enhancing the looks of your landscape.*

Planting a new tree will not only enhance the looks of your landscape, but it can help you save money on your energy bills while improving the environment we all share. Consider these statistics on the value of planting trees:

- The net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to 10 room-sized air conditioners operating 20 hours a day. *Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture*
- If you plant a tree on the west side of your home, your energy bills should be 3% less in five years. After 15 years, the savings will be nearly 12%. *Source: Dr. E. Greg McPherson, Center for Urban Forest Research*
- Landscaping, especially with trees, can increase property values as much as 20%. *Source: Management Information Services/ICMA*
- One acre of forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and puts out four tons of oxygen. This is enough to meet the annual needs of 18 people. *Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture*
- There are up to 200 million spaces along our city streets where trees could be planted. This translates to the potential for absorbing 33 million more tons of carbon dioxide per year, which would save \$4 billion in energy costs. *Source: National Wildlife Federation*
- The planting of trees improves water quality, resulting in less runoff and erosion. Wooded areas help to prevent the transport of sediment and chemicals into streams. *Source: USDA Forest Service*

It's a fact...if you plant a tree (or trees) this fall, everyone wins!

## CHANGE LAWN?

### BE RUST!

#### PREVENTION

Sound cultural practices help to prevent rust disease. These include:

- Watering early in the morning to reduce evaporation
- Removing no more than 1/3 of the grass blade with each mowing
- Regular fertilization to promote good nitrogen levels
- Pruning trees and shrubs to increase air flow and light penetration to any grassy areas underneath

If rust disease does become a problem, a corrective application of nitrogen or a fungicide treatment may be necessary to bring it under control.



## Watch Out for Invasive Plants

Even the best of intentions can sometimes go wrong. Such is the case with invasive plants. These can be characterized as non-native plants that are more aggressive than their native counterparts. Since native plants aren't able to compete successfully with them, invasive plants are able to spread rapidly (in some cases, much too rapidly).

A perfect example of an invasive plant is kudzu, which was originally introduced to the southern United States from Asia as a soil stabilizer. It very quickly became apparent that kudzu can grow as much as 50' in a season while smothering all of the plants in its path! Some other plants that can be invasive include multiflora rose, purslane, bamboo, morning-glory (shown at right), bracken fern, foxglove, pampas grass and Japanese honeysuckle.

Whenever introducing a new plant species to the garden, it's important to check for any warnings about excessive seed production, invasive growth traits or other

undesirable characteristics. In some cases, it may be best to avoid a plant type altogether, while others will simply need more care to keep them under control.





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## Dividing Hostas to Expand Your Garden

Early fall is a great time to divide hostas. One way to do it is to dig up a clump using a sharp spade, then separate a section with the roots intact. If the clump is small, it's usually possible to separate it by hand. For larger clumps, a sharp knife may be necessary. Depending on the size of the clump, it may be divided in half, into thirds or even into quarters.

Once separated, sections should be planted in holes that are as deep as the root ball and 1 ½ times as wide. The distance between plants should be equal to the expected diameter of the clump at maturity, and they'll benefit from a good watering after planting.

By dividing your hostas, you can easily share or expand your garden – and it won't cost you a thing!



WORD SEARCH

B	H	D	A	N	D	E	L	I	O	N	A	R	B
Q	L	E	B	E	D	S	T	R	A	W	E	U	C
R	M	A	N	N	Z	I	J	F	E	V	T	I	P
D	A	F	C	B	I	D	E	A	O	T	W	A	Y
E	T	O	I	K	I	K	H	L	O	Z	M	L	T
E	C	X	I	R	M	T	C	N	V	M	S	E	E
W	H	T	J	Y	K	E	W	B	N	K	S	R	L
K	W	A	W	F	E	E	D	K	P	U	A	R	O
C	E	I	Z	G	E	S	J	I	F	C	R	O	I
I	E	L	R	D	E	V	R	K	C	R	G	S	V
H	D	U	B	I	N	D	W	E	E	D	B	D	D
C	P	G	R	O	U	N	D	I	V	Y	A	O	L
S	G	O	O	S	E	G	R	A	S	S	R	O	I
D	O	L	L	A	R	W	E	E	D	F	C	W	W

### Can You Find the 17 Weed Names Hidden in This Puzzle?

Words can be found forwards, backwards, horizontally, vertically and diagonally.

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| BEDSTRAW    | FOXTAIL     |
| BINDWEED    | GOOSEGRASS  |
| BLACK MEDIC | GROUND IVY  |
| BUTTONWEED  | HENBIT      |
| CHICKWEED   | MATCHWEED   |
| CLOVER      | SPURGE      |
| CRABGRASS   | WILD VIOLET |
| DANDELION   | WOODSORREL  |
| DOLLARWEED  |             |

