Care Tips

mer evenings on the porch, staring out at a fresh green landscape?

A beautiful lawn doesn't just happen. It needs to be tended to once the signs of spring are in the

Here are steps you can take right now to help make your lawn the pride of the block this sum-

- In early spring, the condition of the lawn will depend upon the type of winter that has just passed, as well as how the lawn was treated in the fall.

Some common early-spring problems to watch for are dead patches, mole runs, grub damage and brown patches.

Raking the lawn lightly typically rids the lawn of most winter problems, and will help you assess the extent of any major damage.

- Dead patches come from water accumulation and ultimately, poor

You will need to seed or sod these areas for the grass to grow. Spring is a good time to repair winter damage to your lawn.

remove thatch, which shows up won't help the grass grow better, as a light-brown layer of decaying but will improve the look of the vegetation (mostly old leaf sheaths landscape.

Looking forward to warm sum- and clippings from previous years), can be done when the lawn is com- task. pletely dry

cultivation and other cultivation activities should be done when the turf is actively growing.

- To promote early greening of the lawn, cut off dead leaf blades when the lawn is dry enough to

Don't cut it too short. Mow only to about two inches high during the spring.

grow successfully if it is well-watered and cared for.

with a high-phosphorous fertilizer, which fosters root growth.

While many people are anxious to start their fertilizing program early in the spring, resist applying fertilizer before the ground is your grass, not the weeds.

in the spring when the roots are actively growing will help stimulate turf recovery from winter water uniformly once a week. dormancy.

- Trimming grass that is creep-A more thorough raking to ing onto the sidewalk or driveway Early spring is perfect for this

Then, the edging blade can Dethatching, power raking, core more easily slice through dense turf because the soil is moist and grass roots are not as thick as other times of the year.

- Several undesirables are probably growing within your lawn.

A weed and feed-type fertilizer can eliminate weeds in your grass. Or if the weeds are sparse, pull them out by hand.

- Be smart when watering. Your - Seed sown in early spring will lawn only needs one inch of water per week, including rainwater.

Deep, infrequent waterings are Fertilize newly seeded grass much more effective than short, daily efforts. Generally, the roots of weeds grow only in the first two to three inches of soil.

> The deeper the water soaks into the lawn, the more it will benefit

Overwatering your lawn might Applying fertilizer to your lawn be the biggest mistake homeowners can make when it comes to their grass. Make this your mantra:



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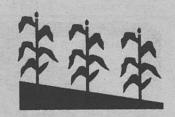
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Five Common Lawn Care Questions Answered

Taking care of your lawn and crabgrass seeds. garden can be a tough task. Chances are your landscaping is the first control the crabgrass in your yard. thing people notice when they look at your home, so you want it to be in tip-top shape.

Here are answers to the five ized two to three times a year. most commonly asked lawn and garden questions.

Q: What can I do about lawn damage caused by my dog?

A: Unfortunately, there is no quick fix when it comes to brown mulching mower? spots caused by dog urine.

But you can prevent this dam- grass clippings to your lawn. age in the future with heavy watering and a little baking soda.

Heavy watering will help dilute the concentration of nitrogen in your yard, and adding baking soda to a watering can full of water will help neutralize the area.

Q: What should I do if my lawn is overrun with crabgrass?

A: Crabgrass grows vigorously in hot weather. A dense lawn is better equipped to resist an invasion of crabgrass so be sure to water and fertilize your lawn properly.

Another way to discourage crabgrass growth is by mowing higher.

and prevents the germination of fungus disease.

You can also try herbicides to

Q: How often should I fertilize

A: Most lawns need to be fertil-

Fertilizing should begin with your first mowing and finish when the grass is done growing for the

Q: What are the benefits of a

A: Mulching mowers return

Benefits include: a healthier lawn (clippings serve as fertilizer and help retain and conserve needed moisture), time savings (you do not have to stop to empty the mower bag or fertilize as often), and cost savings (you save on clippings disposal and fertilizer costs). If you mow regularly, a mulching mower will be beneficial to your lawn.

Q: When and how often should I water my lawn?

A: Most lawns require about 1 inch of water a week. The best time to water is early in the day.

Watering at night puts your lawn Higher grass creates shade at risk for developing mildew and