

# Healthy lawn still possible despite draught

AP — A healthy green lawn may still be possible this season even if it suffered damage in last summer's heat and drought.

If more than half of the lawn is in good shape, it can be rescued by renovation and overseeding, according to Bob Tracinski, consumer information manager for John Deere, manufacturers of lawn and garden equipment.

Renovation includes cleaning the lawn of weeds, thatch and debris. Overseeding is planting new seed over the entire area. "Not only will renovation take care of the trouble spots, it's a beneficial treatment for the existing lawn," Tracinski said.

He suggests starting the rehabilitation by testing the soil, so that its lime and fertilizer needs can be determined. The testing can be done by most county extension offices for a small charge. Prepare the samples by cutting thin slices six or seven inches below the lawn's surface, including soil from several areas of the lawn. Put them into clean containers labeled with information about the location of the soil and what you intend to plant there.

**NEXT, REMOVE** unwanted weeds and grasses, using a herbicide that will not leave a residue that might harm healthy grass or new seedlings. Expect to wait several weeks before attempting to plant new seed.

Thatch, a layer of leaves, dead grass and other debris, accumulates between the grass blades and the soil surface. It can build up thickly enough to prevent water and nutrients from getting to the soil, and it can harbor pests and disease. The easiest way to deal with it is by using a thatching machine or thatching attachments for riding mowers and lawn tractors, which can be rented. These function as mechanical rakes, cutting into the lawn vertically and slicing the debris with sharp blades or tines.

Then the soil should be loosened up and aerated, to allow air, water and nutrients to pass through to the roots of the grass. Aerating can be done manually by punching holes in the soil with a large spike or by a machine that can be rented. It's easiest to work on a damp lawn.

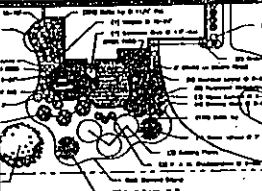
IF THE SOIL TEST points to lime

or fertilizer, add them next. For most lawns, a fertilizer ratio of three parts nitrogen, one part phosphorus, and two parts potassium works best. Use no more than one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of lawn.

The ground is now ready for new seed, which should be spread evenly

over the area, raking it in lightly with the bare soil. Seeds should be covered with no more than one-quarter inch of soil.


Finish and maintain the lawn with regular sprinkling, fertilizing and mowing. In hot, dry weather, water several times a day.



**FOR THE QUALITY MINDED CLIENT**

- DESIGN/BUILD
- WATERFALLS
- PLANTING
- INTERIORSCAPE
- RETAINING WALLS
- IRRIGATION
- WOOD DECKS
- BRICK PATIOS

**VISIT OUR SHOWROOM-ASK ABOUT OUR NEW COMPUTER-DESIGNED LANDSCAPING**



**skandia**  
*Landscaping and Lawn Care*



Since 1955

12340 Middlebelt Road (N. of 6 Mile) Livonia  
475-1735 • 477-6828 SHOWROOM  
478-2727 HOURS: Mon.-Fri. 10-6  
Sat. 10-6



**Sun worshipping**  
equipment available now!

The sun is coming, the sun is coming! Don't be caught without the proper patio attire. We offer the largest selection of quality outdoor furniture, umbrellas, replacement cushions and patio paraphernalia. Great savings, every day even on the good stuff.

*Quality patio and casual furniture*  
a piece patio sets from \$219.00. Hundreds of umbrellas from \$69.00. Large variety of replacement cushions.

**THE GOOD LIFE STORE**

**JIMMIES  RUSTICS**

Livonia  
522-9200  
29500 W. 6 Mile Rd.

Birmingham  
644-1919  
221 Hamilton