

Pollution's Two Sources

There are two kinds of pollution, natural and man-made. Natural pollution includes such things as dust, pollen, volcanic ash, smoke, fire, dust storms and weeds. Man-made pollution results from engine exhausts, industrial smoke and fumes, electric generating plants, home heating units, and waste disposal.

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Suburban Gardener
Lawn Care? Now It's 'Turf Management'

By BETTY FRANKEL
 Special Writer

To keep the lawn looking better than the one across the street, we used to read up a bit on "lawn care" and then hoped for the best. Now, though, that's all obsolete and the experts talk about "turf management programs."

It sounds as though we might need an executive suite, a staff of secretaries, and a computer or two. Actually it all boils down to the same old thing: planting the kind of grass that suits your soil type and sun and shade conditions; feeding to keep it healthy and growing vigorously; deep watering during dry spells; and mowing often enough so that no more than 1/3 of the grass blade is nipped off at each clipping.

These elements are indicated by the numbers on the fertilizer bags. A fertilizer such as a 10-5-5 or a 20-5-10, higher in nitrogen than in phosphorus or potash, is normally best for bluegrass lawns. A fescue lawn, however, will not grow well with a high nitrogen level.

The nitrogen necessary for a good bluegrass lawn can be provided by inorganic fertilizers (either soluble or insoluble) or by natural or synthetic organic fertilizers. The soluble inorganics can be used to give the lawn a quick boost in early spring to make the grass green quickly and to thicken it before weeds can invade the lawn.

With the organics there is no danger of burning and the nitrogen is released slowly over a long period of time. The natural organic fertilizers include those made from processed sewage or tankage and from seed meals. The urea-formaldehyde organics are synthetic.

For good results, fertilizer should be applied in early spring and again in late summer. For best results three applications are recommended.

do not need any lime or gypsum. The water with which we sprinkle our lawns is rich in lime and keeps the soil from becoming too acid.

In addition to feeding and reseeding bare spots, other spring care may have to include detaching. That is a rather recently recognized lawn problem. It is the accumulation of a dense layer of stems and grass clippings at the soil surface.

If it is thick it can prevent water, air and nutrients from penetrating to the grass roots. If the thatch is over a half-inch thick, it should be removed by a brisk raking or by a detaching machine. Remove clippings when the lawn is mowed to help prevent future thatch build-up.

Aeration is needed where the soil has been compacted by heavy traffic. This can be done by plunging a pitch fork into the soil or by a machine that removes little plugs of soil.

Rolling is seldom needed. DESPITE careful "turf management programs," lawns are sometimes invaded by weeds or fall victims of diseases. Then special care programs are needed.

If weeds are not too plentiful, they can be dug out with a sharp tool, such as a notched asparagus cutter or even a jack-knife. If it is a bad invasion, a weed-killer may be needed.

If crab-grass was a problem in the past year, it can be controlled by a pre-emergent killer put on in early May.

MOST LAWNS in this area

Garden Reminders

Plant trees and shrubs as soon as the ground is dry enough to be worked. There's still time to start vegetable and flower seeds indoors. Start tubers of begonias, cannas and caladiums indoors. To control scale insects on trees and shrubs spray with a dormant spray before buds swell. Edge garden beds. Wood ashes from the fireplace make excellent fertilizer for flower beds. Feed lawns, trees, shrubs. Use lawns a close mowing with the mower set at 1 inch to remove dead leaves and stems, then raise the cut to about 2 inches for the future. Give the lawn a brisk raking.

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