



## GENERAL SOD MAINTENANCE TIPS

After your new lawn is in for 2 weeks and you have mowed it to the proper height, it will require approximately 1/2" of water every 2-3 days for another 3 weeks. *During very dry conditions you may need to apply more water. If the grass blades have a dull blue/green appearance the sod needs water.*

Once your lawn is established (5-6 weeks), it will require approximately 1"– 1-1/2" of water (or rain) per week. Do not water lightly throughout the week, but rather do 1 or 2 heavy waterings. The amount of water required will depend on the weather conditions at the time. Frequent rains will require less water. (1/2" during the week = you water only 1/2". Very warm, windy conditions may require up to 1-1/2" per week).



Aerate the yard 1 to 2 times per year, fall and/or spring. If aeration is done only 1 time per year, fall is the best time. Core aeration will aid root system development in heavy soils by creating voids in the soil to allow the roots to grow into. It will also act to mix the soils between the sod and the existing soil in the yard, creating a better soil, and it will remove the layering of the soils which will hinder root development. The soil that is removed from your yard in the core aeration process has organisms that will speed the process of thatch deterioration. Therefore, if you aerate on a regular basis, you should not have a problem with excessive thatch.

De-thatching, more commonly referred to as power raking, should be used as a corrective measure rather than a preventive measure. Core aeration should be looked at as a preventive measure.

If you have a sprinkler system, do not overuse it. Water is a valuable resource that should not be wasted. A common misconception is that "if the grass isn't green, water it." When in fact it may be a deficiency in the soil. Too often, a sprinkler system is set to run every day or every other day, rain or shine. "Set and forget." This not only wastes water and money but is also harmful to your lawn. Once your lawn is established, it should not require more than 1" – 1-1/2" of water per week, depending on weather conditions. Cooler temperatures will cause it to require even less water. This watering should be done as heavy watering of 1/2" – 3/4" at a time over the course of 1 to 2 days. Then not watering for 6 – 7 days. This will force the root system to grow deeper in the soil to get to moisture and will help create a deeper, more dense root system and therefore a stronger plant that will not dry out as quickly. Frequent light waterings however will cause the root system to stay shallow and therefore will be exposed to the warmer and dryer soil and will dry out quicker, requiring more frequent waterings. The grass plant will also be weak and will be more susceptible to disease. When determining how much water to apply, keep in mind the weather conditions we are having at the time.

More frequent mowings will promote top growth and root system growth. This could help fill in thin or damaged areas of the lawn.

**Gypsum:** The use of gypsum is recommended as a general practice to aid root system development, aerification, water, fertilizer usage and thatch decomposition.

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