**Core Aeration: What to Avoid for a Healthy Lawn**

Core aeration is a great way to rejuvenate your lawn—but only if done correctly. Mistakes in timing or technique can damage your turf instead of helping it. Here’s what to avoid:

**Mistake #1: Poor Timing**

* **Too dry or too wet?**  
  Soil that's bone-dry won't allow deep core aeration, and soggy soil can clog the machine or tear the turf.
* **During drought or extreme heat?**  
  Avoid aerating when your lawn is already under stress—it could worsen the damage.
* **Wrong season?**
  + *Cool-season grasses*: Core aerate in **early fall or spring**
  + *Warm-season grasses*: Core aerate in **late spring or early summer**  
    Never core aerate when your grass is dormant.

**Mistake #2: Improper Equipment or Setup**

* **Using a spike aerator**  
  These can compact soil rather than loosen it. Always use a **core aerator** that removes actual plugs of soil.
* **Skipping pre-watering**  
  Light watering the day before helps the tines penetrate better—but don’t soak the lawn.
* **Forgetting to mark obstacles**  
  Flag sprinkler heads, valve boxes, and anything underground to avoid damage.
  + Tip: We recommend calling in a public utility locator company before starting any job. Private utilities are different than public utilities.
* **Rushing the job**  
  Going too fast can damage both the turf and your aerator. Take your time.

**Mistake #3: Neglecting Aftercare**

* **Heavy foot traffic too soon**  
  Stay off the lawn for a few days to allow the soil to settle and recover.
* **Removing the soil plugs**  
  Let them decompose naturally—they feed your lawn with nutrients.
* **Mowing too soon or too short**  
  Give grass seed time to establish and keep your mower height higher during the first mow.
* **Skipping topdressing**  
  Applying a light layer of soil post core aeration helps smooth the lawn and improve long-term soil quality.