Orlando Jimenez Fremont Lawn Care

40891 Valero Drive, Fremont, CA 94539

510-944-0241

www.fremontlawns.com

Organic lawn care is easy. You can have a beautiful, healthy lawn without using chemical fertilizers and pesticides. You'll love knowing that your organic lawn is safe for kids, pets, and the environment. You'll also love not having to spend hours every week taking care of it.

Low Maintenance Organic Lawn Care

A beautiful organic lawn doesn't take a lot of work. You won't need to mow as much, because organic lawns grow more slowly. That's because synthetic fertilizers force grass to grow faster than normal. Organic lawn care encourages your grass to grow deeper roots, so you won't have to water as often. And because organic lawns are so healthy, they naturally discourage pests, diseases, and weeds.

Mowing

Mowing properly is the most important thing you can do for your lawn. Proper mowing can discourage weeds, cure disease, save water, and provide food for your grass.

Set lawn mowers to their highest setting, or to about 3 to 3 ½ inches. Taller grass shades out weeds and encourages deep root growth. Mowing too short puts stress on your lawn, leaving it looking brown and dry.

You can further avoid stressing your lawn by keeping mower blades sharp and never mowing more than one-third of the grass blades' height at a time. Also, avoid mowing when it's hot and sunny.

After you mow, leave clippings on the lawn instead of raking them. Clippings fertilize your lawn and stimulate earthworm activity, which helps break down thatch.

Watering

The key to successful lawn irrigation is to water deeply rather than frequently. Frequent, light watering encourages shallow roots and wastes water. Infrequent watering encourages your lawn to grow deep roots, which helps it survive drought. You can also increase the water holding capacity of your soil by spreading organic matter such as compost on your lawn. Lawns need about one inch of water, including rain, a week. But because all soils are different, not all lawns need the same amount of water. If you live in the South or have a sandy soil, you may need to water more. Unless your lawn turns brown during its active growing season, you may not need to water on a regular basis at all.

Remember, your lawn doesn't always have to be green. Let it change with the seasons. Grass naturally grows more slowly in the summer, so brown grass usually means your grass is dormant, not dead. It will come back in the fall.

Fertilizing
Use organic lawn fertilizer to replenish the nutrients your grass needs. Organic fertilizers release nutrients slowly, providing a steady supply of food for your grass. And unlike synthetic fertilizers, organic fertilizers don't harm beneficial organisms like earthworms. You can find organic fertilizers at most lawn and garden centers.

Fall is the best time to fertilize northern lawns. Your grass will store up food over the winter and get off to a good start in the spring. Too much spring feeding forces grass to grow too much, which can be stressful over the summer.

Warm-season grasses that are grown in the South benefit from summer feedings to help them get through the summer. Good times to fertilize southern lawns are in early June and again in August.

Controlling Weeds and Pests

While pesticides and herbicides may kill pests in your lawn, they don't fix the underlying problems. The best way to control weeds and pests is to keep your lawn healthy in the first place with organic lawn care.

If pests or disease strikes, try to correct the underlying cause. You may be cutting your grass too short or watering too much. You may want to get your soil tested to check its pH or nutrient levels. Try spreading corn gluten meal on your lawn in the spring and fall. It suppresses new weeds and is an excellent slow-release fertilizer. But don't use corn gluten meal on newly seeded areas or on areas you plan to seed. It also prevents new grass from growing.

Tolerating pests
Embracing organic lawn care means learning to tolerate a few pests or weeds in the lawn. When you have a pest problem, try to look at the whole picture. For example, moles-the nemesis of many lawn fanatics-are actually beneficial to your lawn. Moles often make bothersome mounds in your lawn, but they also eat grubs- pests that can kill your grass. Minimize damage to your lawn simply by pressing mole ridges flat and watering the area well.

Free Organic Lawn Care Resources

There are many exceptional, free magazine-style websites that are full of information on easy organic lawn care. Some of these resources are specifically directed toward one aspect of lawn care while others focus more on organic lawn care as a whole.

- The Pure Lawn Blog: This resource is excellent for people who live in the midwest United States and are interested in organic lawn care. The tips in this blog run the gamut from

highly specialized to very simple, and the posts are all written in an accessible and honest way.

- Extremely Green Lawn Care Guide: Extremely Green is a website that's dedicated to many facets of green living, but their lawn care guide is a major focal point of the site. The subject headings are set up in a similar way to the Organic Lawn Care 101 site, but it also goes more in-depth on various lawn care recommendations and it includes a timeline of when certain things should be done to your lawn to keep it healthy.
- Department of Energy and Environmental Protection: This webpage is filled with tips for restoring a lawn to an organic state. There are also plenty of links to resources on various topics, such as having your soil tested and how to encourage your local officials to expand organic lawn care practices on public spaces.

Take Things One Step at a Time

It can be a little intimidating to take on something new and expansive with your lawn. However, there really isn't any reason to approach organic lawn care with any trepidation. It can be a fun and enriching way to care for your lawn, and it carries with it the added benefit of being safer for you and your family. When you take the time to learn the ropes and try out new techniques for yourself, easy organic lawn care is something you can definitely handle.

Maintain Lawn, Save Planet? Why Landscaping MAtters

The United States is becoming a much greener place, as turfgrass pops up around the country as a staple of houses and parks everywhere. Its growing ubiquity, although widely considered to be a good thing, comes with a host of environmental considerations.

There are some 80 million home lawns across the country, according a study by Ohio State University. Half of those lawns are maintained by a mow-only practice, which means they do not get treated with fertilizers, irrigation or pesticides, the lowest level of care.

Among conservationists, lawn care matters because certain techniques can cancel out some of greenery’s environmental benefits. Among other things, turfgrass helps captures carbon and other pollutants.

For lawns that receive low-level care, the average carbon sequestration rate is lower than those maintained by “lawn care service or apply fertilizer multiple times a year,” the industry’s idea of best management practices, the Ohio State study found.

A separate study by environmental and energy consultant Ranajit Sahu found that, “for the average, managed lawn,” turfgrass captures “significant amounts of carbon” than what a “typical lawnmower” produces. Unlike Ohio State’s study, which centered mainly on lawns without much external treatment, Sahu looked at lawns that included watering and fertilizer as part of their maintenance.

With lawns, little things can mean a lot

Sahu's study confirmed what other researchers have found: lawn maintenance habits have a significant impact on grass' ability to pull CO2 out of the atmosphere. Some of the smaller details—such as grass clippings and length—can have big influence on whether turfgrass helps or hurts the environment.

"Most people mow their lawns too short," says Tim Johnson, director of horticulture at Chicago Botanic Garden. This, he says, creates opportunities for weeds, which in turn creates opportunities for herbicide use, which can produce carbon and harm the environment.

Turfgrass that's allowed to get overly weedy, under-fertilized or irrigated improperly can make lawns patchy and more likely for soil erosion, said Susan Barton, associate professor in plant and soil sciences at the University of Delaware.

Home lawns, however, are just part of the picture. There are countless turfs in parks, golf courses, athletic fields and business parks across the country, most of which require considerable levels of maintenance. The turfgrass industry, estimated to be worth at least $40 billion, includes a broad array of sod farms, maintenance, equipment and manufacturing.

Demand for more greenery—including golf courses, which use "highly managed turfgrass," according to experts at the University of Florida—have some concerned about the effects of seemingly relentless turfgrass expansion.

The perils of green creep

A 2012 study by the University of Pennsylvania found that converting vacant lots into green ones, which consisted of grass and trees, reduced crime and made people feel safer.

J. Scott Ebdon, professor of turfgrass science at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, said in an interview that as "urbanization increases in future years," so will the total acreage of lawn in the United States.

University of Delaware's Barton, however, worried that sort of growth could create "wasted land" and diminished natural areas. She suggested replacing turfgrass with a "forest or meadow" that can provide "much more diversity and many more ecosystem services," like clean water, clean air and wildlife support.

"We need to get ecosystem services from suburbia now," she says.

Morris of the National Turfgrass Federation acknowledged that there is some lawn overkill happening, but insisted it was key to environmental health as well as aesthetics.

"While turfgrass may be overutilized in some situations, it is a group of plants that can provide tremendous landscape function," he said.

Additionally, according to Ebdon "actively growing and healthy turf" can provide benefits like noise and heat reduction, topsoil preservation and "entertainment value." But a loss in turf

density due to problems like diseased grass and insects, can lead to a “significant loss” to these functions and benefits.

Maintaining the “all-important function” of turfgrass systems—carbon reduction—is what Ebdon called “the single most important issue.” This includes advancing grass variety and adopting lawn practices that cut down on mowing, water and pesticides, he says.

Watering In the Summer

Summer is the time to turn your sprinkler system back on. Watering your lawn deeply during this hot season is crucial to the development of deep root systems, which are the basis for resilient and durable lawns. Deeply-rooted turf grass can withstand stressful weather conditions much better than shallow-rooted plants. Be sure to water deeply as this promotes the development of deep root systems.

But what does it mean to water deeply? The answer depends on your soil type:

- Sandy soil should be watered 0.8 to 1.2 inches per foot.
- Loam soil should be watered 1.8 inches to 2.4 inches per foot.
- Clay soil should be watered 2.2 inches to 3.2 inches per foot.

Once you determine the soil type of your lawn, you need to set the appropriate sprinkler time. The Soak and Cycle method is the best measurement you can use here:

- Take empty containers and spread them across your lawn.
- Turn on your sprinkler system for 15 minutes, then measure the containers with a ruler. Afterwards, turn on the sprinkler for another 15 minutes, then measure again.
- These measurements should help you determine the flow rate of your sprinkler heads. Time your sprinkler system to the appropriate amount of water that your soil type needs.

Proper distribution of sprinkled water is key in preventing brown patches in your lawn and also enhancing the health of your grass.

The best time to water your lawn is early in the morning before the sun rises too high. If you water in the afternoon, it will evaporate before your lawn can adequately absorb it. And if you water at night, your lawn will remain wet overnight and become prone to diseases.

Don’t forget to also account for rainwater every time you’re watering your lawn. If there have been instances of showers during the week, you won’t need to water your lawn as often. If you use an advanced irrigation system, you may want to adjust your timers depending on the

changing weather patterns. Also, be sure to inspect your system for blockages and leaks for effective results.

Weeds and Pest Control in the Summer

Weeds sprout in the summer and can become more visible and even overshadow grass on your lawn if not controlled. For those who missed the window during spring to use pre-emergent herbicide, there's still a chance to remove the weeds from your lawn. The two main methods of weed removal are cultural control and chemical control.

"Cultural control involves hand weeding, followed by creating an adequate growing environment for the turf species present," says Sam Bauer, Executive Director of the North Central Turfgrass Association. Chemical control, Bauer adds, involves using "post-emergent herbicides containing the active ingredients quinclorac or fenoxaprop."

Cultural control is a quick remedy if your lawn is only sparsely populated with weeds. Just bend down and pluck them (easy weeds to pick are dandelions and broadleaves). Chemical control is a better solution if your lawn is heavily populated by weeds. Bauer recommends these products with the essential active ingredients: "fenoxaprop-P-ethyl (Bayer Crabgrass Killer for Cool-Season Lawns) or quinclorac (Bayer All-In-One Weed and Crabgrass Killer, Ortho Weed-B-Gon + Crabgrass Killer, others)." Only spray herbicides when temperatures are below 85° F to avoid stressing your grass any further.

In the same vein, don't forget to treat for common lawn pests that show up in summer. Some insects like turf caterpillars and grubs are quite harmful, especially if left to multiply uncontrolled. Be on the lookout for symptoms of pest infestation like wilting and unusually high feeding activity. If the pest infestation looks to be extreme, consider hiring a lawn care company to help you eradicate them.

Potentially disastrous pests that should be in your watch include sod webworms which often appear in June. These feed on grass blades and can wipe out your entire lawn in days. Grub worms are another family of pests that can cause extensive damage to your lawn during the summer months of July and August. In most cases, these pests cause a scorched appearance on the grass to deprive your lawn of that lush green color you've worked so hard to maintain. Others common outdoor pests to look out for include aphids, carpenter ants, fleas, chinch bugs, caterpillars.

Summer lawn diseases

During the summer, there are six common diseases to watch out for including Necrotic Ring Spot, Fairy Rings, Summer Patch, Dollar Spot, Powdery Mildew, Red Thread, and Rust. Most of these summer lawn diseases are fungal, which means you will need to apply an appropriate fungicide as advised by an expert. You also need to avoid watering in the evenings as this is often the chief cause of fungal diseases.