



EARLY
SPRING

WELCOME
TO A BRAND-NEW
GROWING SEASON



*"Spring is nature's way of
saying, 'Let's Party!'"*
– Robin Williams

We think Mr. Williams hit the nail on the head with that quote! There's no doubt about it: After a dull and dreary winter, the first signs of spring will put a bounce in anyone's step. Birds are singing, flowers are blooming, the sun is shining, and the air just feels ripe with possibilities. We're always excited about the potential each new growing season brings, and we're especially pleased to be working with you to keep your property looking its best.

We're here whenever you need us, so please don't hesitate to call anytime you have a question or concern. Your satisfaction is our first priority, and we hope you'll let us know if there's anything we can do to improve your experience with us.

Working together, we can make your property more beautiful and more valuable...while enhancing the quality of the environment we all share.

Kicking Crabgrass to the Curb

SUCCESSFUL CONTROL INCREASES WITH PREVENTION

The rules of crabgrass control are really very simple. Do nothing, and your lawn stands the chance of being overrun by this clumpy, coarse-textured, all-around unsightly weed. Take preventative action, on the other hand, and crabgrass can be kept in check.

MAINTAINING HEALTHY TURF IS THE FIRST STEP

Every lawn has crabgrass seeds in the soil, and these seeds are more likely to grow when turf doesn't receive adequate care. Regular fertilization, proper mowing, good watering practices, and insect and disease control will all help to maintain a thick lawn that is less likely to be marred by crabgrass.

PRE-EMERGENTS TAKE IT A STEP FURTHER

For even better control, pre-emergent herbicides can be applied to your lawn. As their name suggests, pre-emergent herbicides stop crabgrass plants from emerging by inhibiting seed germination in the soil.

To get the best results from pre-emergents, proper application, timing and follow-up care are essential.

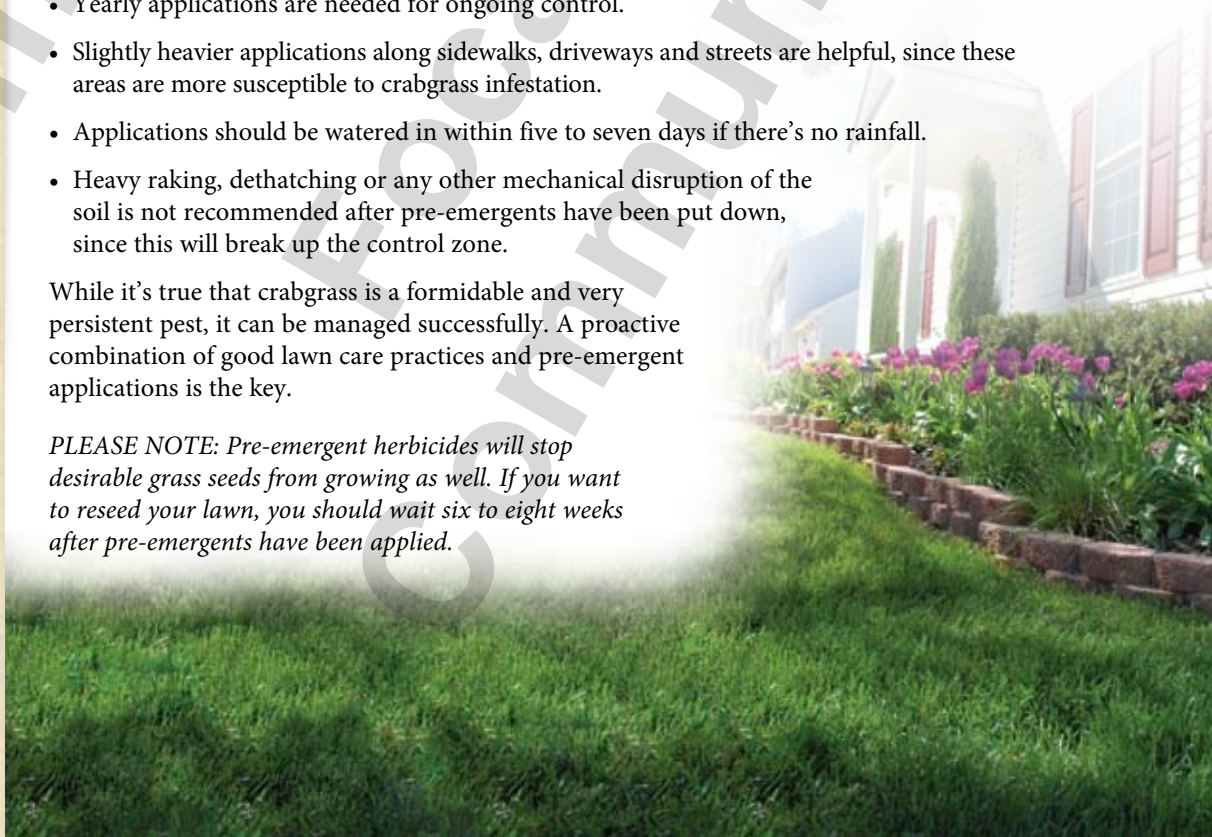
- Pre-emergents should be on the lawn before crabgrass seeds begin germinating.
- Yearly applications are needed for ongoing control.
- Slightly heavier applications along sidewalks, driveways and streets are helpful, since these areas are more susceptible to crabgrass infestation.
- Applications should be watered in within five to seven days if there's no rainfall.
- Heavy raking, dethatching or any other mechanical disruption of the soil is not recommended after pre-emergents have been put down, since this will break up the control zone.

While it's true that crabgrass is a formidable and very persistent pest, it can be managed successfully. A proactive combination of good lawn care practices and pre-emergent applications is the key.

PLEASE NOTE: Pre-emergent herbicides will stop desirable grass seeds from growing as well. If you want to reseed your lawn, you should wait six to eight weeks after pre-emergents have been applied.



*Regular fertilization helps to
prevent crabgrass growth.*



Spring Seeding Presents Unique Challenges

As warm weather returns and you take stock of your lawn and landscape this spring, you may be tempted to jump start your turf's growth with some new grass seed. It's only natural to think of spring as the perfect time for seeding your lawn. After all, the spring season brings new growth everywhere we look. However, the truth is that late summer and fall are really better times for seeding. There are several reasons why.

SPRING SEEDING CHALLENGES

A variety of factors can interfere with spring seeding success:

- Soil is still cool in the spring, so germination is slower than during the late summer and fall.
- New grass seed will be forced to compete with any crabgrass seeds trying to grow. And if pre-emergent herbicides have been applied to prevent crabgrass, they'll prevent new grass growth as well. New grass seed shouldn't be planted until six to eight weeks after a pre-emergent application.
- New grass planted in the spring won't have time to fully develop its root system before hot, dry summer weather arrives. As a result, extra watering will be necessary during the summer months.

LATE SUMMER AND FALL ADVANTAGES

In the late summer and fall, on the other hand, conditions are more favorable for seeding your lawn. At this point in the year:

- Warmer soil encourages faster seed germination.
- Cooler temperatures mean less stress for new grass seedlings.
- Crabgrass and other weeds aren't so much of a concern, and pre-emergents can safely be used next spring.
- New grass plants will have both the fall and spring growing seasons to get established before summer weather returns.

WHEN SEEDING CAN'T WAIT

Of course, it's not always possible to wait until late summer or fall for seeding. If that's the case with your lawn, proper after-care will be critical for seeding success. This includes:

- Keeping the seedbed moist until well germinated, and providing extra water through most of the summer.
- Mowing at normal height in seeded areas to help the new grass fill in.
- Avoiding weed control applications on the young grass until it has been mowed three to five times.

Finally, remember that good seed-to-soil contact makes a big difference. Hand raking, slice seeding and core aerating are all good ways to open up the soil and make it more receptive to new grass seed.



Planting grass seed can bring new life to your lawn.



Proper after-care, including plenty of watering, is essential.



Answers to photo puzzle on back page:
1. There is a pair of sandals to the right of the pool.
2. Umbrellas at the back of the pool have changed color.
3. There is a bird flying to the right of the house.
4. The bay window shows a beach scene.
5. Flowers have changed color in the urn to the left of the pool.
6. There are new flowers planted to the right of the house.
7. There is a beach ball in the pool.
8. There is an extra window pane in the middle of the house.

What's the Deal with Lawn Disease?




Lawns are vulnerable to all sorts of fungus diseases, many of which thrive in the cool, moist conditions of spring. A variety of factors influence lawn disease development, including how turf is managed, the environment the lawn grows in, and the weather.

Proper feeding, watering and mowing will improve lawn vigor and increase resistance to fungus diseases, but sometimes even healthy lawns come under attack. Some conditions that can encourage disease development, and the diseases most often associated with them, are listed in the chart at right.

The symptoms of lawn disease vary depending on the specific fungus causing the infection, but some of the more common signs include:

- Patches of silver-gray or bleached-white turf
- A pinkish or yellowish cast to the lawn
- Purplish-brown spots with lighter centers on grass blades

Some fungus diseases are capable of killing off large portions of turf, so it's best to act quickly if you notice symptoms like those mentioned here. Fungicide treatments may be needed to improve your lawn's chances for recovery and decrease the potential for long-term damage.

CONDITIONS	DISEASES	
Lawn Lacks Nutrients, Water	Rust Disease Dollar Spot Red Thread	
Excessive Nitrogen, Heavy Thatch	Leaf Spot Melting Out Snow Mold	
Compacted Soil, Heavy Clay Soil, Excessive Thatch	Summer Patch Necrotic Ring Spot Fusarium Blight	

With Storms Coming Soon, It's a Great Time to Prune!

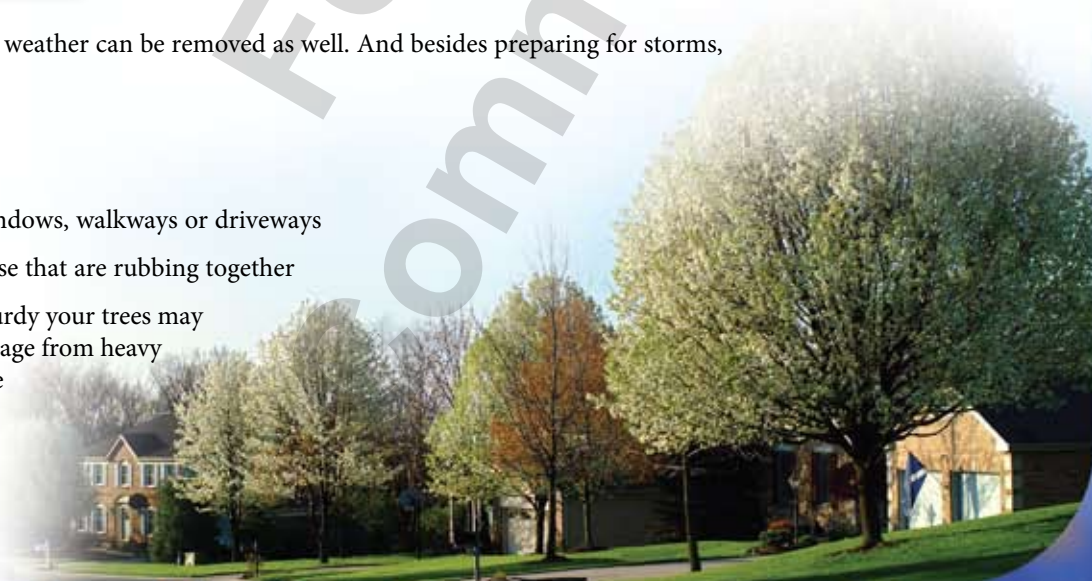
Proper pruning can go a long way toward preventing tree damage from spring and summer thunderstorms. For example, maintenance-level pruning can create a sturdy, well-spaced framework of healthy branches and an open tree canopy. This will decrease wind resistance and minimize the risk of tree failure in stormy conditions, since air will be able to flow freely through the branches.

Pruning may also be beneficial if branches and foliage have grown thicker and heavier than what the roots can easily support. In cases such as these, tree failure can occur when excessive rainfall creates waterlogged soil that can't keep the roots anchored. Pruning away extra branches and foliage may help to minimize failure.

Dead wood that is likely to fall in stormy weather can be removed as well. And besides preparing for storms, pruning can be done to:

- Improve air circulation
- Increase exposure to sunlight
- Remove branches that are blocking windows, walkways or driveways
- Remove overlapping branches and those that are rubbing together

Remember, no matter how strong and sturdy your trees may appear, all of them are susceptible to damage from heavy storms. Preventative pruning is one of the best means of protection.





NOTE: This panel prints black and white on 4-page Simple Solution newsletters.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Medicinal Power of Plants

Some plants not only look great in the garden, but can provide medicinal benefits as well. Here are just a few of them:

Calendula

Sticky resin can be used to heal wounds. Can help with respiratory infections when combined with herbs and taken internally.

Lavender

Essential oils can help heal wounds and burns. Flowers have antimicrobial properties to fight bacteria, viruses and fungi. May help with mild depression when brewed in a tea.

Roses

Fruit is high in vitamin C to combat the common cold. Leaves, flowers and buds may also help with indigestion.

Purple coneflower (echinacea)

A well-known immunity booster. All parts of the plant have medicinal properties.

There's more to some plants than meets the eye!



Can You Tell the Difference?

See if you can find the eight differences between the two photos. Answers are on page 2.

