



Lawn Care

■ Spring

March – May



Clean-up: Rake lawn to remove leaves, twigs and other debris that accumulated over the winter.

Mowing: Resume mowing when turfgrass begins actively growing. Mower blade height should be set at 2½-3 inches. If you mow regularly, leave the clippings on the lawn to recycle trace elements back to the lawn. Start the season with sharp mower blades.

Weed Control

Crabgrass: Crabgrass is a summer weed that germinates March-May. Spring is the best time to control it using a Crabgrass preventer when temperatures are between 50 and 55 degrees for 3 or more consecutive days. (Or when the Forsythia bloom). If you are planning to apply grass seed to your lawn, you must use a crabgrass preventer that is safe to control crabgrass without killing the grass seed.

Dandelions & other broadleaf weeds: can be controlled with a broadleaf weed killer. Spot treatment is preferred when only a few weeds exist. When the problem is severe, use a granular weed killer or a “weed and feed” product.

Watering: If spring rains are not adequate (1 inch of rainfall a week), then supplemental irrigation is needed. It is best to apply 1 – 1½ inches of water in one or two applications per week. For more specific watering directions, refer to our handout “Watering the Right Way”.

Fertilizing: If you missed the Fall/Winter feeding, you may use an organic, high quality lawn fertilizer in early April and again around Memorial Day.

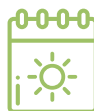
Insects: You may apply an application of grub control as the weather warms if you didn’t apply one last summer/fall and have grubs present in the lawn.

Seeding: Although now is a good time to seed thin or bare spots, the best time for doing major seeding or lawn renovation is mid-August through fall.

Liming: Now is the time to lime – if it is needed. Lawns prefer a pH range of 6.2 to 6.8 (6.5 is optimum). See pH testing block on the back of this handout to learn about our free pH testing.

■ Summer

June – August



Mowing: Keep mower blade sharp and set the height at 2½-3 inches.

Weed Control: Herbicides (weed killers) should be avoided when temperatures are above 85 degrees and/or windy summer

days. If small patches of weeds are located, hand weed or spot-treat with an herbicide.

Watering: Watering is critical during periods of dry weather. Apply 1 – 1½ inches of water per week, preferably in one or two applications and not broken down to short intervals each or every other day. For more specific watering directions, refer to our handout “Watering the Right Way”.

Fertilizing: No applications are necessary during these months. Summer fertilizing can encourage disease problems in the lawn. An application of Ironite, a high-quality supplement, will help keep your lawn healthy throughout the summer.

Insects: Insecticide for grub control is best applied in August to prevent damage this fall and next year. Keep an eye out for chinch bugs and sod webworms at this time as well. If you suspect an insect problem, see a Hicks lawn care specialist to help determine the best treatment.

Seeding, Renovation: Lawns are best renovated beginning in mid-August. If a total renovation is required, a non-selective herbicide can be used to kill existing turf. Within 7-10 days, the area can then be prepared for seed or sod. Cooler temperatures and adequate rainfall, typical of Long Island autumns, make for ideal turfgrass establishment.



■ Winter



November – February

- **Mowing:** Last mowing for the season is typically around Thanksgiving. Set mower blade height to 2 inches for the final mowing.
- **Rake:** Remove fallen leaves frequently.
- **Fertilizing:** Last application for the year should be accomplished before November 1st.

Snow and de-icing salts: Stay off turf when frozen. If de-icing salts are used, be careful of runoff that can damage existing turf and plants. Sand and other non-chemical traction- providing materials are safer for lawns, shrubs and trees near walks and driveways.

Ph Testing

Lawns prefer a pH range of 6.2 to 6.8 (6.5 is optimum). Lime is used to raise the soil pH if it is below the desired range. Bring a half-cup of DRY soil to our Lawn & Garden Information Desk; we will gladly test your soil's pH for FREE and the results are available while you wait. A proper pH is very important to a healthy lawn. Grass absorbs fertilizer and other minor elements best when the pH is within the optimal range leading to a healthier lawn with fewer weeds and less fungus. pH meters and kits are also available for sale for at-home, on-the-spot testing.



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