



SPRING IS HERE

Most lawns coming out of winter will be looking a bit sad and sorry. They will lack vigour and colour and with water restrictions and not much rainfall it is important that this is improved before the heat of summer hits Perth. Spring is the time to get them back into shape and prepared to meet the rigours of summer on water restrictions. Without care now your lawn will be at a serious disadvantage when the mercury starts hitting consistent 30 plus days.

WETTING AGENT - Firstly you need to give your lawn a good quality wetting agent like Baileys Gro Sorb or Soil Soak. This might seem unnecessary, especially if there is still some rain around. This however is when you should apply a wetting agent, before the ground gets a chance to dry out and become anti wetting. It is much harder to get dry ground wet then to keep some moisture in the soil and it is this keeping of the ground moist that will give your turf the best chance as the temperature gets hotter. This may need to be repeated 2 or 3 times over the season. A liquid wetting agent is also a good idea if you are applying a pesticide or fungicide that is absorbed by the leaf. This will encourage the plant to suck the chemical in and get maximum penetration. For the same reason it is a good idea to use a granular wetting agent if your pesticide or fungicide is absorbed into the soil.

FERTILISER - Secondly it is time to apply a fertiliser. This should be done lightly and regularly every six weeks. Doing it lightly and regularly will keep the turf healthy without giving you the growth flushes. Encouraging massive growth flushes is detrimental to the health of your turf as it causes the turf to thatch up and puts stress on the plant when it is cut down to below green leaf level (scalping). The idea of an accurate fertilising program is to keep the plant healthy with a steady growth pattern. Fertilising now will encourage a strong sward that will help it cope with heat stress and a healthy strong lawn is better at resisting weeds, diseases and pests.

HERBICIDE - Thirdly, if your turf is infested with weeds it is recommended that you remove them as they compete with your turf for water and nutrients and leave weak bare patches in your turf sward. If you have a couch variety of turf a good broadleaf weed control containing the product di camba will give you the best results. If however you have buffalo or a lot of roses you should use a broadleaf weed control containing bromoxymil. Wintergrass, guild ford grass and onion grass should start to die of as the season warms up however they can still be sprayed with products such as wintergrass killer (the product containing endothol is better if you already the plant) and sempra for your Guildford, onion and nut grasses.

SPRINKLER AUDITS - Finally and last but not least it is very important that you do an audit on your sprinkler system. This means that you place out some catch cups and run your system. You then measure how much water you have in each cup. If you have approx 20mm then you will get your 40mm per week over two watering days. If you have less (or sometimes none) you need to check your system for damaged, blocked sprinklers or busted pipes. You need to check which way your nozzles are adjusted and if you need to add more sprinklers if your pressure has changed. This audit is the most important thing you can do for your turf as most brown, dry patches on your lawns are caused by faulty retic systems and not pests such as black beetle. If your lawn has dry spots no amount of fertiliser or pesticide solutions will make it wet!

DETHATCHING / VERTIMOWING - If your lawn is spongy and scalping during mowing, now is the time to employ a contractor to vertimow your lawn.