



AUTUMN - WINTER TURF CHECK LIST

Just because winter is here doesn't mean we can completely forget about the lawn, especially if we have one of the new soft leaf buffalo varieties that are capable of good winter colour and vigour if looked after correctly. The ideal is to create conditions that encourage a strong root growth allowing your lawn to develop into a thick lush matt that repels weeds and other turf varieties and can handle insects without them becoming a problem. This is the way to maintain an environmentally friendly "green" lawn.

Fertiliser - Firstly, if you have continued your fertilising program through to May your soft leaf buffalo should still be lush and green. This means that the roots are still active. To keep up this activity it is advisable to apply a granular fertiliser which has some iron content at a rate of 1kg per 100sqm. This is classed as a very light dusting every 6 weeks and is best applied with a Scotts hand held fertiliser spreader to ensure an accurate spread of such a tiny amount.

Mowing - Your mowing should continue regularly at 25mm, however the blades should be raised to around 40mm if the buffalo has been planted in shaded areas. Regular mowing will also remove seed heads from weeds, so cutting down the amount of germination for future seasons.

De compaction and aeration - If your lawn has been laid in heavy shade areas that has trouble drying out it is important to break the ground open to allow the water to drain away. While turf needs water, it doesn't like to have wet, soggy feet. This causes the roots to rot and again creates patchy growth and even areas to die back completely. The best method in a small area is to work a garden fork backwards and forwards.

Trees / Shade sails - This is the time to look at cutting back or thinning out any trees or shrubs that are creating excess shade. Also remember to roll up any shade sail as turf needs as much sun light as possible to photosynthesise and create the food it needs for strong growth (at least 4 hours a day is ideal for Sir Walter). If you are thinking of planting a tree in a lawn area it is a good idea to look at a small deciduous variety. These will lose their leaves in the colder months, allowing your turf access to sunlight while still providing shade in summer.

Wetting agent - It is best to apply a wetting agent at the end of winter rains to ensure the ground doesn't dry out again. It can be very difficult to re wet the soil again, especially as we are only able to water as per the water restriction. Watering only twice a week will not re wet a hydrophobic soil without a wetting agent, putting the turf under stress before the heat of summer even begins.

Weeds – Winter weeds compete with your turf for nutrients and the weaker your turf matt is, the more the weeds can take a hold. The following weeds are common to Perth. Products to combat these weeds are available from our retail outlet in 14 Prindiville Dve Wangara



Guildford Grass



Bindii (Onchunga / Jo Jo)



Winter Grass



Flatweed



Creeping Oxhalis



Clover

Funguses – Sir Walter has a very good resistance to funguses, although the ground in shaded areas especially should be well draining, as dampness encourages disease and fungus. (See aeration / de compaction). Most household fungus problems can be treated using either Mancozed + or a copper fungicide. Bayleton can also be used for mushrooms , fairy rings etc.