



**EARLY  
SPRING**

## WELCOME TO A NEW GROWING SEASON!

We're excited about working with you to keep your property looking great this year! There are lots of ways that we can help, and we hope you're taking full advantage of the services we have available. Not sure whether or not we offer a particular service? Just ask!

In fact, we encourage you to contact us with any questions, concerns or feedback you'd like to provide. We're here whenever you need us, and we're just a phone call away.

Our goal in this newsletter is to explain how and why things happen the way they do and remind you of important seasonal needs. We'll also be passing on ideas and suggestions that can help your property reach its true potential.

We're glad you've chosen to partner with us for the care of your property. Great customers are hard to find, and we value your business!

# Crabgrass is Ready for a Comeback

## HEALTHY LAWNS HAVE LESS OF THIS BOTHERSOME WEED

It's a fact: No lawn is completely immune to crabgrass. Thankfully, there are steps that can be taken this spring – and throughout the growing season ahead – to keep it under control.

### AN UNFAIR ADVANTAGE

Just one mature crabgrass plant can produce thousands of seeds, which are able to grow in the hottest, driest conditions. Even in compacted soil along sidewalks and driveways, crabgrass seeds have no trouble germinating.

### SO WHAT CAN BE DONE?

The healthier and thicker your lawn, the less crabgrass it's going to have. Four keys to a lush lawn include:

- Fertilizing regularly
- Controlling insects and diseases as needed
- Removing no more than 1/3 of the grass blade each time you mow
- Making sure your lawn gets from 1" to 1 1/2" of water per week

### EXTRA PROTECTION

A post-emergent herbicide can be used to treat any established crabgrass plants in your lawn. This type of herbicide will kill off the crabgrass as it is absorbed through the leaves of the plant.

A pre-emergent herbicide will also be very effective against crabgrass as long as it is applied at the right time (before the crabgrass seeds germinate). This preventative treatment will form a barrier in the soil, and newly sprouted crabgrass will be killed off before it can emerge aboveground.

There are always going to be crabgrass seeds in your lawn. So, annual treatments with a pre-emergent herbicide, and post-emergent herbicides as needed, are recommended for ongoing control. If you're planning on reseeding this spring, it's important to wait six to eight weeks after a pre-emergent application (the pre-emergent can prevent grass seed from growing too). Likewise, post-emergent herbicide shouldn't be used on newly seeded lawns until the new grass has been mowed at least three times.

With a combination of good lawn care practices and the appropriate herbicides, crabgrass doesn't stand a chance!

### 5 Steps to Crabgrass Control

- 1 Fertilizing
- 2 Insect & Disease Control
- 3 Proper Mowing
- 4 Watering
- 5 Herbicides



## EARLY-SPRING ESSENTIALS: GET A JUMP ON THE SEASON AHEAD!

**PRUNING** – Many structural problems in ornamentals can be corrected right now, before plants leaf out, with corrective pruning.



**CLEAN-UP** – Leaves and debris should be raked and removed from lawn areas, as well as shrub and flower beds.



**MULCHING** – A spring application will help to prevent weeds, conserve moisture in the soil and keep soil temperatures cooler as the weather heats up.



## Want More Variety in Your Garden? Try Starting Seeds Indoors.

Starting seeds indoors is a great way to try plant varieties that may be unavailable at your local garden center. Not only is it cheaper than purchasing plants, but there's something very rewarding about planting seeds and watching them grow!

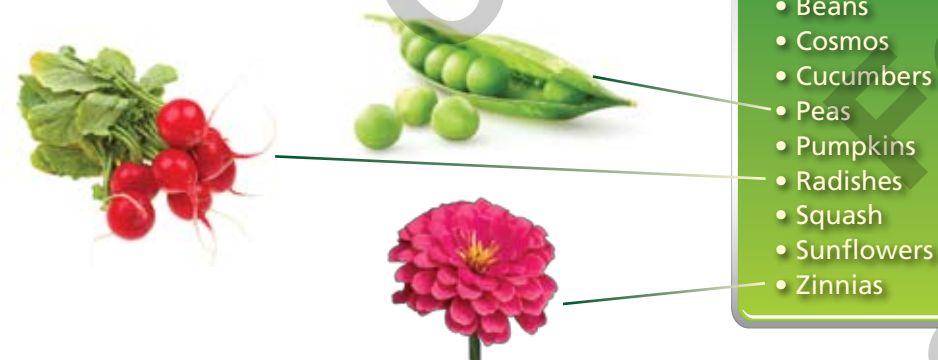
A soil-less seed starting mix or packaged potting soil is the best growing medium. Any clean container that allows for drainage will work. Generally, smaller seeds call for shallow planting, while larger seeds should be planted a bit deeper.

Of course, light is an essential ingredient. A bright location with southern exposure will work, but you'll get better results suspending a fluorescent or grow light fixture above your seedlings. If you notice seedlings reaching for light, turn them so they'll develop evenly.

Be sure to water regularly. A seed germinates just once, and if the emerging seedling is deprived of water, it dies. The goal is to keep the soil evenly moist, but not waterlogged.

You can check the back of the seed packet to find out the best time to start seeds so that they're ready to plant outdoors when soil and air temperatures are right. In general, the range is from four to eight weeks between seed sowing and outdoor planting. It's a good idea to introduce seedlings gradually to cool outdoor spring temperatures so they can harden off before transplanting.

Not sure what plants to grow from seed? Try some of those listed at right, all of which germinate easily and grow quickly. Have fun!



- Beans
- Cosmos
- Cucumbers
- Peas
- Pumpkins
- Radishes
- Squash
- Sunflowers
- Zinnias



### "LETTUCE" MAKE A SUGGESTION

Lettuce ("Ruby and Emerald Duet" from Renee's Garden shown here) can easily be started indoors then grown outside in a container. Many lettuce varieties can be planted in the spring and again in the late summer for multiple harvests!

## Pavers Give Pizzazz to Walkways and Patios

Pavers come in all sorts of shapes, sizes, colors and materials, including eco-friendly recycled rubber. They make a great alternative to concrete if you want to add a little more character to a walkway or patio.

Durable and versatile, pavers will bring form and function to your property while complementing your landscape's natural components. Plus, the joints between pavers help to eliminate the cracking that normally occurs over time with poured concrete.

Consider some of the paver types shown here when it's time to get started on your next walkway or patio project!

Flagstone



Slate Tile



Brick Pavers



## For Landscape Improvements with No Surprises, Plan Carefully!

Landscape improvements can make a tremendous difference in the looks, usefulness and value of your home. There's no time like the present to start thinking about new projects.

### IT ALL STARTS WITH A PLAN

Landscapes consist of several different parts, such as walkways, hedges, trees, flower beds and patios. A good improvement plan will take each part of your property into consideration and ensure that all of your new landscape projects work smoothly together.

Even if you're just making a few improvements immediately, creating a strong plan early can save you significant time and money over the long term. You will find that with a good plan, it's easier to set priorities, and individual projects can be tackled more quickly because they've been thought out in advance.

If you have an older landscape, you might consider a systematic plan for rejuvenating a small section of your property each year. This is an effective way to spread landscape renewal expenses out over several years while "keeping up" with the aging of your plants. Plus, by focusing on just one or two areas at a time, there will be less distractions to slow down your progress.

By planning carefully now, you can look forward to a beautiful landscape that improves the quality of your life for years to come.



*When making landscape improvements, a thorough plan is a must.*



## Spring Seeding

**QUESTION: CAN MY LAWN BE RESEEDED IN THE SPRING?**

**ANSWER: YES, BUT FALL IS A BETTER TIME FOR IT.**

Soil is still cool in the spring, so seed germination will be slower than in the fall. The new grass will also have to contend with hot weather soon after sprouting, so lots of extra watering will be needed throughout the growing season. In the spring, weeds can choke out new grass plants before they have a chance to get established. It doesn't help that broadleaf weed controls shouldn't be used on spring-seeded lawns until the new grass has been mowed several times. Plus, if pre-emergents are used, you'll need to wait six to eight weeks before planting grass seed.

Fall seedlings will benefit from cooler temperatures, so they won't have to deal with heat stress as they're putting down roots. The soil will be warmer in the fall, which will encourage faster seed germination. There will be less competition from weeds during the fall season. Finally, fall-seeded lawns will have both the fall and spring seasons to get established before summer's heat and dryness return.

If it's absolutely necessary, seeding can be done in the spring. For more successful seeding with less hassle though, reseeding in the fall is your best bet.

## Test Your Knowledge of the Natural World

- 1.) The sugar maple is the state tree of four different states. Can you name them?
- 2.) What is the official flower of the United States?
- 3.) The lower leaves of the compass plant tend to line up in which direction?
- 4.) Only female mosquitoes bite and drink blood. What do the males feed on?

**Extra Credit:** What did Babe Ruth wear underneath his baseball cap to keep cool?

*Answers: 1.) New York, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Vermont. 2.) The rose. 3.) North-south. 4.) The nectar of flowers. Extra Credit: A cabbage leaf.*

