

Timely Turf

Tips

April 2014

Hallelujah, spring is here. Okay, not so fast, the weatherman is saying it should snow again tonight. Welcome to April in Minnesota; snow today – sixty degrees possible in a week. What does that mean to gardeners raring to get their hands dirty? Patience; the late spring means cold wet soil that still needs to dry out before too much traffic goes on it or it is begun to be worked.

Yard Care:

Begin the month by picking up sticks, litter, and pet waste that has accumulated over winter. Avoid hard raking on wet soils, which can damage soggy turf and compact the soil. Wait until mid-month after the soil firms up to give the lawn a good thorough cleanup.

Sweep leaves, sand, rocks, ice melt product or other debris off of any hard surfaces in order to prevent it from reaching the storm sewer.

You may not need to apply fertilizer in the spring. If the lawn is well-established, clippings were left on the turf, and a fall application was done, then spring fertilization may not be necessary. Consider a soil test for help in knowing the correct type and amount of product to use and when to apply it. See coupon below for savings. The following link explains how and where to collect your sample: <http://soiltest.cfans.umn.edu/how-to-submit-samples/lawn-garden/>

If your yard had problems with crabgrass or other annual weeds, apply a pre-emergent herbicide when the soil temperature reaches 50 degrees. Be sure to watch your email for a notice from Steve when it is the right time to apply.

Garden Care:

Do not rush to remove last year's plant residue. With fluctuating spring temperatures, that residue provides some frost protection and early spring gardens are too wet for any foot traffic anyway. Use the crumble test to see if the garden is ready for any work. This is done by taking a handful of dirt, shaping it into a ball, and poking the ball to see if it crumbles into smaller pieces. If it doesn't break apart, then wait to begin in order to prevent soil compaction.

Prune apple trees early this month and spray dormant oil to control insects before growth begins.

Plant cold crops (lettuce, beets, carrots, peas, spinach, and radish) starting April 15.

Prune arborvitae, yews, junipers, and spruce before new growth starts.

Indoor pests are waking up. Check out this link for great information about various insect pests: <http://blog.lib.umn.edu/efans/ygnews/2014/04/current-insects-april.html>

Hummingbirds are coming. Be ready.

Hummingbirds should be arriving beginning around the first week of May. Prepare for their expected appearance with some tips for feeders found on this website: www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/humm/feeders_tips.html



Previous issues of Timely Turf Tips newsletters are available at our website: www.hugofeedmill.com

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