

# Did your lawn survive?



After a couple of months of mostly 90 and 100 degree high temperatures along with very little or no rainfall, most lawns were forced into dormancy. Of course-unless you had watered your lawn. The heat and drought was so prolonged that as we went through August and September you found out what part or parts of your lawn were permanently damaged. Normally 1" of water each week will allow the lawn to actively grow, but when getting consistent heat you most likely needed about 2" each week. If you were watering, your lawn probably did pretty well all summer, but Yikes! How about the price of your

water bill? A major mistake many homeowners make was watering either too frequently and/or at the wrong time of the day. The best way to water a mature lawn is deeply and infrequently, which means water 2 or 3 times each week at ½" each time. Most sprinklers will deliver ½" of water in 30-40 minutes to that particular area they are covering. If you need to water more, increase the minutes to 45-60, not the days of the week. Also, water from around sunrise to mid morning (about 5am-10am) or early to mid evening (about 5pm-7pm). Remember the mid day sun and heat will fry the lawn and consistently watering at night will promote disease and insect issues. In addition to proper watering, mowing correctly is crucial. Don't mow just to mow; many lawns could have gone multiple weeks or a month in between mowing this summer. Except for the very end of the season you should not mow lower than the middle setting on the mower-normally that will give you a 3" cut height. During any summer (June-August) you should raise that height, especially a summer like 2012. The grass roots depth can mimic the height of the grass blades when consistently mowed at the same height. This will help the grass obtain more moisture deeper in the ground during a drought along with the taller grass being able to decrease surface temperature and ground surface water evaporation. Following these tips will help your lawn better survive a summer like 2012.



If your lawn did suffer from the summer of 2012 call Chem-Wise and have us come out to do an evaluation of your lawn. We can let you know what is needed to get your lawn looking better than it did before the drought!

**Lawn after the stress of  
a summer drought**

## Chem-Wise Referral Program

Refer a friend or neighbor to Chem-Wise Turf Management and when they sign up and complete our annual Turf service, you will receive \$20 off your next service!

# Frequently Asked Questions



## **Q: What exactly is "Thatch"?**

A: Thatch is a spongy layer of material that decreases the overall health and vigor of your lawn. Thick thatch layers intercept air, water, fertilizer, insecticides and other materials restricting their penetration to the root zone. In addition, thick thatch can harbor surface feeding insects and disease organisms. Thatch comes from dead and living grass stems (the

base of the plant) and roots. Grass clippings do not contribute to thatch build-up. Thatch layers over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch are too thick, but can be decreased through consistent core aerations.

## **Q: What do all those fertilization numbers mean on the invoice?**

A: They stand for Nitrogen- Phosphorous-Potassium which are the three main (or macro) nutrients needed by the grass. The numbers are a ratio of parts or granules between all three nutrients. So 34-3-11 means for every 34 granules of Nitrogen in the package there are also 3 Phosphorus and 11 Potassium granules. Nitrogen is the most important nutrient and contributes to color, growth and density. Potassium is the second most important nutrient and is used for overall plant health, combating traffic tolerance and disease/insect damage. Phosphorous is important in root growth and seed germination.

## **Q: Should I bag or mulch my grass clippings?**

A: Normally you should not bag your clippings, but we do recommend mulching them. Please understand that grass blade clippings are almost entirely water based and by mulching them you are returning nutrients (which we are providing to your lawn) and moisture back to the turf. When mulched, grass clippings can typically breakdown within a week. However, bagging your clippings can be a good idea in certain cases, if you were on vacation and the grass is 6" tall, you would want to bag your clippings in this case because they would smother the lawn. Also you would want to bag your clippings with some turf diseases, so you do not keep returning the disease to the soil. Once these types of problems are corrected you can resume mulching.

## **Q: I had a problem with Japanese Beetles last year in my trees, does this mean I should expect a grub problem this year?**

A: Yes. Grubs are the larval stage of Japanese Beetles, along with 7 other beetle species. The beetles that you saw on your trees last summer laid their eggs in the soil. They then develop into the grubs that can cause a lot of damage to your lawn. During the winter, the grubs will dig deeper into the soil. During May they will rise to the root level and feed on the roots of your lawn. They will then hatch out into Japanese Beetles adults in June to begin their life cycle all over again



"I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars"

Walt Whitman

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## Interesting Lawn Facts

Nationally, homeowners spend \$6.4 BILLION per year on lawn care service!

A lawn that is deprived of moisture for 45 days will typically suffer a 20% loss, and most likely, turn a dormant straw-color during that period, although probably isn't dead-after several days of moderate temperature and moisture (natural or supplied), re-growth will begin with visible results about two weeks after dormancy is broken.

Recovery rates among hospitalized patients are often quicker when their rooms view a landscaped area than patients with non-landscaped views.

Where vegetation grows, energy consumption is less than in places where there are no plants.

Turfgrasses help purify water entering underground aquifers by its root mass and soil microbes acting as a filter to capture and breakdown many types of pollutants.

625 square feet of lawn provides enough oxygen for one person for an entire day.



Prepay discounts expire March 1<sup>st</sup> and lawn treatments start at the end of March so be sure to get your 2013 contracts signed and returned!

Call or email us with any questions

**630-236-1600 847-577-0740**

**chemwise@sbcglobal.net**

# Additional Services we offer you may not be aware of

- 1) "Top Dressings" using various materials like calcium, lime or gypsum.
- 2) A new specialty weed pre-emergent material called "Tenacity" can be applied at the same time a "slit" or "over" seeding is done. Until now grass seeds and weed pre-emergents could not be used together.
- 3) Soil samples can be taken and the results are given to you in a well explained diagram containing a wide spectrum of soil nutrient information.
- 4) We can inject various materials into tree trunks like insecticides, for example to treat for Emerald Ash Borer, Fungicides, for example to treat for Apple Scab, along with treating nutrient deficiencies like Iron or Manganese, all while being very environmentally friendly, especially in sensitive locations.
- 5) We can apply "Moisture Manager Granular QD" which is a unique root zone moisture management product that effectively reduces watering requirements for turf. It can be applied once each year, but is highly recommended when seeding and/or aerating.
- 6) We are now incorporating an organic-based fungicide material into our preventative and curative disease control programs.



Visit us at [www.chem-wise.com](http://www.chem-wise.com) to see more information regarding all of our services!

## Grub Facts

- Grubs are white, tan and/or brown in color, with a 'C' shaped body when found in soil
- Grubs are the most serious and destructive lawn insect pest in Illinois
- Grubs like areas with a lot of sun light and are not typically found in shady lawns
- Skunks, raccoons and opossums will dig in lawns to search for grubs as food



Chem-Wise Turf Management does offer a preventative grub treatment that is applied during our second treatment or third treatments.