

SUMMER LOVIN' FOR YOUR LAWN

Spring-Green Lawn Care Offers Tips to Keep Landscapes Lush As Temperatures Climb

(Yorkville, IL)---Ever wonder how your neighbors achieve thick, vibrant lawns year after year or how they keep their lawns and landscapes healthy as temperatures continue to rise throughout the summer months? The answer is simple: They work at it!

“This is the time of year people are enjoying their outdoor spaces the most so it’s necessary these areas are in tip-top shape,” says Steve Johnson, the local manager of Spring-Green Lawn Care. “Keeping lawns healthy now will also make preparation for the cooler weather much easier when the time comes.” Here are some tips from Johnson to keep lawns and trees looking their best from the beginning of the summer to the end.

- 1. Address Pests:** One single insect can lay thousands of eggs, ensuring a continual attack on your lawn and landscape but if you know where to look for these pests, their impact can be minimal. For your landscape plants, Johnson says to start by looking at the leaves or needles and keep an eye out for chew marks, feeding trails or curled leaves, as all can be indicators of insect activity. Insects that bore into the trunk or develop in the tips of pine trees, however, can be harder to locate. If you see a D-shaped hole in the trunk of a tree, that is an indication of a flat-head borer like the Emerald Ash Borer, which is responsible for killing tens of thousands of Ash trees in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois and putting many other states at risk for sporadic outbreaks. Johnson says to contact a lawn care professional or county extension office immediately if your Ash is beginning to die at the top, as it could be an indication of Emerald Ash Borer infestation. As for lawns, most surface-feeding insects will hide in the thatch layer during the day so you need to look for signs of their activity versus the actual insects. The most obvious sign of surface-feeding insects is turf that is thinning or losing color. If you notice pencil-sized holes, it’s possible your lawn has Sod Webworm. Hoover says lawn care professionals like those at Spring-Green Lawn Care are trained to inspect and treat lawns for insect damage.
- 2. Mow, Mow, Mow Your Lawn:** Mowing is a simple process but it has more impact on the health and growth of a lawn than any other regular maintenance activity. Start by setting your mower deck to 2½ to 3½ inches – Johnson says a soda can on its side should be able to slide under the mower at this height – and mow your lawn when it needs it as

opposed to keeping to a weekly schedule. Understand turfgrass grows slower in the summer and infrequent rainfall can also play a factor in sluggish growth so running a mower across drought-stressed turf can hurt instead of help. Also since mowing opens up the tip of the grass blade, it's best to mow early in the morning after the dew has dried or in the evening when temperatures have dropped instead of in the heat of the day when the most moisture can be lost. Lastly, Johnson says that because grass is between 80- and 90-percent water, clippings and nutrients can be recycled back into the lawn, providing beneficial organic material for future growth.

- 3. Watch Your Water:** When Mother Nature doesn't supply enough rainfall, supplemental watering is integral to maintaining a healthy lawn but Johnson says to remember too much water can be wasteful and even detrimental to the lawn's lifespan and too little water can lead to turf that's more susceptible to disease, insect and weed infestations. A well-maintained lawn needs one inch of water per week to stay green and growing so instead of setting your automatic sprinkler system so come up every day to water each zone for 10 minutes, set the system to run only every three to four days for a longer time per zone – a practice which prevents roots from growing closer to the surface. Johnson says you can also use hoses and a pulsating portable sprinkler, leaving it in one position for 30 to 60 minutes before moving it to another location. Early morning watering is best, as watering in the evening can increase the likelihood of disease development because the lawn will remain cool, dark and moist for an extended period of time. If you are unable to water due to watering restrictions, your lawn will go dormant, the turf's natural defense mechanism in which it will shut down all non-essential parts, like top growth, to keep the crown alive. Turf is a remarkable plant and most varieties can survive for four weeks or more without irrigation of any type, says Johnson; if the drought is severe enough, some lawn renovation may be necessary once it starts to rain or you are able to water again.

Spring-Green Lawn Care remains committed to being environmentally responsible by enlisting the best practices in lawn and tree care and helping to create both beautiful and beneficial lawns and landscapes. Spring-Green has partnered with The Arbor Day Foundation and for every new Spring-Green customer in 2010, the company will make a donation to plant a tree in a forest that has been damaged by wildfire, insects or disease with a goal of planting a minimum of 10,000 trees this year.

For more information about Spring-Green Lawn Care and its services, contact Rick Hoover at 630-553-9003, via e-mail at sjohnson@spring-green.net or visit www.spring-green/sjohnson.