

Go Pesticide-free....The 3-year lawn care plan!

YEAR 1

April/May

Overseed and top-dress with perennial rye and fescue grass seed mixed with any combination of compost, peatmoss, manure and topsoil. Keep moist until established.
Hand-weed.

Mid to late June

Aerate lawn with core-aerator to break up thatch. Hand-weed. Apply organic fertilizer at prescribed rate on package.

July/August

Hand-weed and monitor for damaged areas. Repair bare patches with grass seed and soil and keep moist until established.

Early August

Apply beneficial nematodes ONLY if significant grub damage is evident (large dead patches of lawn can be pulled up)

Late August/early September

Aerate. Overseed and topdress as needed.

October

Apply organic fertilizer at prescribed rate.

YEAR 2

April/May

Overseed and top-dress with perennial rye and fescue grass seed mixed with any combination of compost, peatmoss, manure and topsoil. Keep moist until established. Hand-weed.

Mid to late June

Aerate lawn with core-aerator to break up thatch. Hand-weed. Apply organic fertilizer at prescribed rate on package.

Early August

Apply beneficial nematodes ONLY if significant grub damage is evident.

Late August/early September

Aerate. Overseed and topdress as needed.

October

Apply organic fertilizer at prescribed rate.

Consider Clover!

Incorporate white dutch clover in your lawn to fix nitrogen thus reducing or eliminating the need for fertilizer!

YEAR 3

April/May

Overseed and topdress if needed. Keep moist until established.

Mid-June

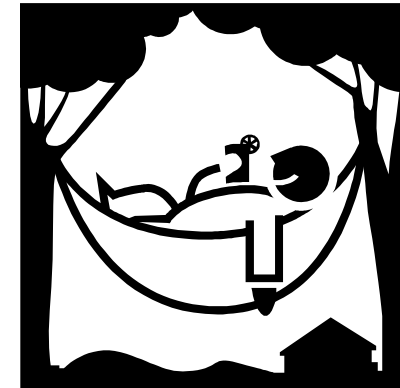
Aerate lawn with core-aerator

Late August/early September

Aerate. Overseed and topdress as needed.

October

Apply organic fertilizer at prescribed rate.



**Relax and Enjoy!
It's only a lawn!**

Ongoing Lawn Maintenance:

1. **Adjust your lawn mower cutting height to its highest level – at least three inches.** Keep blades sharp. Cut no more than 1/3 of the leaf blade off at any one time to avoid stressing the grass.
2. **Leave grass clippings on the lawn** (it's free fertilizer!)
3. **Mulch dry leaves with mower in fall** to add extra nutrients.
4. **Be patient and alert for damage** – there may be setbacks in your transition to pesticide-free but the results will be worth it
5. **Water deeply** if at all. Let your lawn go dormant (brown) if there is a drought (2 or more weeks of no rain). It will green up the next time it rains.
6. **Do not use pesticides (herbicides/insecticides etc)** due to their potential harm to human health and the environment.

Produced by GROUP (Get Rid Of Urban Pesticides) based on the City of Waterloo's Plant Health Care Programme.
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(519) 578-8508
dandelion@gto.net
<http://home.golden.net/~lgoerzen>

Glossary of Terms

Aerator – Machine that pulls out little plugs or cores of grass roots and soil. Leave plugs on lawn as free fertilizer.

Beneficial Nematodes – microscopic creatures that eat grubs. Available at many garden centres.

Corn Gluten Meal – by-product of corn oil production used for animal feed but also recently discovered to prevent annual weed seeds from germinating.

Overseed and Top-dress – spreading a ¼" layer of topsoil mixed with grass seed over existing lawn to help thicken it.

Environmentally-Friendly Tool Box

Grubs – prevention using the above methods is the key. In the case of severe damage, beneficial nematodes can be applied in early August.

Weeds – Corn gluten meal has been shown to suppress annual weed seed germination. Apply early in May. Dig up perennial weeds like dandelions & thistles by hand.

Bare Patches – Spread perennial rye grass seed and topsoil/compost and keep moist until germinated.

PESTICIDE- FREE LAWN CARE – THE 3- YEAR PLAN

