



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Knowledge for the Commonwealth

Henrico County Office
8600 Dixon Powers Drive
P. O. Box 90775
Richmond, Virginia 23273-0775
804/501-5160 FAX: 804/501-5169



VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

A GOOD TURFGRASS MAINTENANCE PROGRAM FOR HENRICO COUNTY

To maintain a good turf, cool-season grasses such as tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass require approximately 3 pounds of nitrogen (N), 1 pound phosphate (P₂O₅) and 2 pounds potash (K₂O) per 1,000 square feet per year depending on the soil and other conditions. A fertilizer ratio of 4-1-2 or 3-1-2 (16-4-8 or 12-4-8 for example) supplies these nutrients in the relative amounts needed. The “SON” lawn fertilization program outlined below recommends that cool-season grasses be fertilized in the fall—September, October, and November. A light, half-rate application of fertilizer may be applied in the spring if the lawn shows a need. In general, the application directions given on the fertilizer label fall within the recommended ranges for nitrogen given below. For questions about a specific analysis, contact the Extension office.

Fertilization with Quick Release Nitrogen Fertilizer

<u>Time of Application</u>	<u>lbs. N to apply/1000 sq. ft.</u>
September	1
October	1
November	1
May 15 to June 15	0 to 0.5

Quick release nitrogen fertilizers may cause burning, especially in hot weather if applied at heavy rates or not watered in thoroughly after application.

PROTECTION AND PROMOTING GROWTH	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER THRU NOVEMBER 15
Control winter annual broadleaf weeds								Most effective
Control grassy weeds	Crabgrass 3/15 – 4/15					Annual bluegrass Bermudagrass 8/15 – 9/15		
Control summer annual broadleaf weeds	Most effective							
Grub control					Most effective			
Prevent or control fungus disease	Seasonal control or prevention depending upon fungus							
Aeration and seeding						Most effective		
Fertilizing							Most effective	
Mowing practices	Remove only one-third of leaf blade; mow tall fescue at 3 inches Don't bag clippings							
Irrigation practices	Water deeply, every 5 to 7 days if needed							
Liming	Soil test every 2 to 3 years to determine needs							
Sun/shade pattern	Change in grass type needed							

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Water	By rainfall or irrigation so that turf grass gets at least one inch of water per week (approximately 625 gallons per 1,000 square feet) during growing season. Calibrate irrigation by placing shallow pans in spray pattern and timing until one-inch is collected. During prolonged drought, let the lawn go dormant to conserve water.
Mowing	Cut often enough that not more than one-third of the grass blade is removed per mowing. Leave clippings on lawn if possible. Mow cool-season grasses at a 2½ to 3 inch height.
Weed control	Identify problem weeds and apply an appropriate herbicide if mechanical control is not practical. Generally, a 2,4-D +MCP P formulation applied in spring and fall when weeds are actively growing will control broadleaf weeds. For hard to control broadleaf weeds, a formulation containing dicamba may be effective. However, avoid applying dicamba near trees and shrubs since it is soil-mobile and can cause damage to these plants.
Crabgrass control	Pre-emergence crabgrass herbicides (crabgrass “preventers”) should be applied in early spring before forsythia blooms fade and dogwoods come into full bloom. A repeat application according to label directions is usually necessary to provide season-long control.
Disease control	Generally fungicides are not necessary, but where high fertilizer applications and dense turf grass is maintained, there is the potential for disease
Lime	Have your soil tested every 2 to 3 years to determine lime needs. Soils need to be maintained, at a pH of 6.2 to 6.5 to maintain a good turf.
Seed	The improved turf-type tall fescues are recommended for current varieties. For new lawns the tall fescues are seeded at 4 to 6 pounds per 1,000 square feet. For over-seeding, use 2 to 3 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

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