



## Lawn Care Basics

### Mowing & Feeding

- Mow your lawn at a height tall enough to develop deep roots; generally, a mowing height of 3 to 4 inches allows grass to foster a deep root system. This promotes the most effective use of rainfall and irrigation, enabling the roots to reach more soil moisture and nutrients.
- Feed your lawn regularly to make it healthy, thick and green all season long. When combined with proper mowing, thick lawns crowd out weeds and are better able to tolerate environmental stresses.
- Leave grass clippings on your lawn to recycle plant nutrients back into the soil. Clippings contain the same beneficial nutrients as fertilizer, and can provide up to one-third of your lawn's annual feeding requirement.

### Watering

For regions east of the Mississippi River, typically there is enough natural rainfall that watering is not normally required, unless extended periods without rain occur. However, if you choose to water, below are suggested tips:

- It's important to use our natural water resources carefully. The appearance of your lawn will tell you when it needs water, i.e., the leaves begin to wilt or the lawn will develop a bluish cast.
- Prime time to water is early in the day; midday heat can cause too much evaporation and evening or night watering can encourage mold or fungus growth.
- Deep and infrequent watering is better than light and frequent, i.e., 1/2 inch twice a week is enough.
- Don't give your lawn a light sprinkling; this promotes shallow roots and may not even reach the soil, depending on how often you water.
- Adjust your watering to the weather; if rain does not fall, the time between needed irrigations is about five days for light, sandy soils and up to 20 days for heavy, clay soils; pay attention to watering restrictions during dry spells or droughts.
- If a screwdriver can be easily inserted in the soil about 6 inches deep, then the ground is plenty moist.



## Lawn Care Basics

### Proper Fertilizer Application

- Choose a fertilizer designed specifically for lawns (N-P-K grade of 29-2-4 or a similar high nitrogen, low phosphorus fertilizer) and use according to label instructions. Always buy the smallest amount of product you need to get the job done and only buy enough product for the current growing season.
- Apply fertilizer when your grass is actively growing. If there has not been enough spring growth to be mowing, withhold application until the grass is actively growing and requires mowing.
- Apply fertilizer only to the lawn, keeping it off hard surfaces (walks, driveways, etc.) where it can be washed off into storm sewers. If fertilizer gets on a hard surface, sweep it back into the lawn. Using a spreader, like the Scotts® Deluxe™ EdgeGuard® Broadcast Spreader with a shield below the hopper makes it simple and easy to keep fertilizer on the lawn.
- Keep lawn clippings, leaves and other plant material off of hard surfaces and out of gutters to prevent them from entering storm sewers and surface waters.
- Avoid fertilizer application if a major rain event is anticipated within 24 hours. Even though healthy lawns effectively hold nutrients in place, heavy rainfall could cause some nutrients to flow off the lawn and into surface waters.
- Set the spreader to the appropriate spreading rate as indicated on the back of the lawn product you are applying.
- Always fill the spreader on a driveway or walkway – not on the lawn, in case some of the product spills.
- Walk at a steady pace for ideal and consistent distribution.