

When new seed is in placed on City construction projects, special care must be taken to ensure it survives. It may take a year or more to establish a deep root system that allows the new turf to withstand stress from seasonal climate changes, wet and dry seasons, and normal residential use. Outlined here are the contractor's responsibilities and a few lawn maintenance tips to assist you when you take over the maintenance of the turf after the contractor has met his obligations.



Contractor, City and Property Owner Responsibilities:

The contractor is responsible for restoring any areas disturbed by construction. What this means is that they will place four inches of a topsoil and compost mixture, then seed and mulch the area. The contractor is responsible for getting the seed to grow. Any areas that do not grow during the duration of the project will be repaired, but homeowners are responsible for mowing and long-term maintenance. *If the new grass is mowed too short, it will die. Neither the contractor nor the City are responsible for grass killed by short mowing.*

New Lawn Care:

The newly seeded areas will require more water than the other areas of your lawn. Keep the seeded areas moist (not saturated) to ensure good germination. Light, frequent watering is better than infrequent, heavy watering. Once the seed starts to come up, continue watering this way until the area has been mowed two or three times. Follow normal watering practices after that point. Overdoing it can rot the young seedlings and if the ground is too wet it can actually inhibit root growth. A trick to use is to put a tuna can in your yard while watering. When the can is full, turn off the water.



Early Morning Watering is Best:

When you water early before it gets too hot and the wind picks up, more of the water is absorbed into the lawn.

Watering in the evenings can be harmful because the cool, moist conditions create an ideal environment for lawn diseases to develop. Grass watered in the morning dries off more quickly, making it harder for a disease habitat to flourish.

Watering in the heat of the day can cause burning when sunlight hits the water droplets that cling to the lawn. The tiny droplets imitate a magnifying glass, which burns the lawn.

Foot Traffic:

Minimize your use of the seeded area for a full season until fully established in order to avoid killing the new fragile plants. For the first six to twelve weeks, only walk on the grass for mowing and watering purposes.



Mowing:

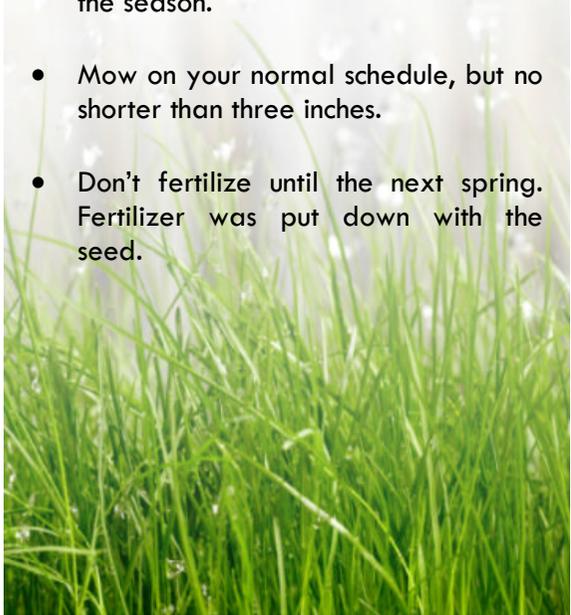
Do not mow your new grass until it is over three inches high, and then do not mow it any shorter than three inches. Unless it is cut too short, mowing will not hurt the new plants. Also, in general care of mature lawns, it is best for grass to be in the three- to four-inch range. This helps to keep weeds down and the grass stays green and healthy with much less water. The longer the grass is, the deeper the roots, and most weed seeds need the sunlight that short grass provides to germinate.

Fertilizer:

Do not fertilize your new grass right away. There is fertilizer in the mulch it was seeded with. If you fertilize this fall, you risk burning it. In the spring, you can use a phosphorus-free fertilizer.

Lawn Restoration Quick Points:

- Light watering daily until it's been mowed two or three times, preferably mornings.
- Don't overwater. Keep the seed moist, not saturated.
- Keep foot traffic to a minimum for the season.
- Mow on your normal schedule, but no shorter than three inches.
- Don't fertilize until the next spring. Fertilizer was put down with the seed.



City Irrigation Policy:

New turf and plantings are exempt for the watering restriction policy for 30 days. Residents who have an even number address can water their lawn on even numbered days and odd number addresses can water on odd numbered days. This is to balance the water demand on the City water system.

More information on lawn care is available through the University of Minnesota Extension Service. (www.extension.umn.edu)



Lawn Restoration

with seed

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