

YOUR GARDEN

Enjoy Your Lawn All Season Long

by John Buechner

(NAPSA)—It's time to be one with nature again. The following tips can help homeowners have the grass greener on their side of the fence:

Watering

- Water deep and often. Most lawns need about an inch of water a week. If you're unsure how long to water, mark one inch from the bottom of several see-through containers and spread them around the lawn. Clock the time it takes to reach the one-inch mark and water for that length of time in the future.

- While water may be applied anytime of day, morning watering is most effective.

Mowing

- Before mowing, be sure the mower blade is sharp to prevent tearing the grass blades.

- Raise the mower to a high setting, so you only remove the top one-third of the grass blade.

- Change the mowing direction each time to keep coarse grasses under control and ensure an even surface.

Grasscycling

- Leave clippings when you mow. The grass clippings will recycle nutrients back into the soil and they don't contribute to thatch buildup.

Thatching

- If your lawn gets soft and spongy, you likely have thatch—dead roots caused by improper mowing, overwatering or fertilizing.

- A little thatch is okay (no more than half an inch) but too much can cause problems.

- To control thatch, ask a lawn care specialist about aeration



By following a few simple tips, you and your family can enjoy spending time in your yard all season long.

and pH balancing.

Weeding

- For a lush lawn, control weeds and unwanted plants with special applications and appropriate treatments.

- Wait for weeds to die, clear out dead foliage and reseed the bare patches as soon as the treatment directions allow.

If you're following these tips and your lawn still isn't up to par, you may want to dig a little deeper. Contact a lawn care specialist for a soil test to analyze the makeup of your soil and possibly identify the causes of a less-than-perfect lawn.

Learn More

For additional tips, log onto lawndoctor.com or call 1.800.4.LAWN DR (1.800.452.9637).

• *Mr. Buechner is the director of technical services for Lawn Doctor, Inc., one of the nation's leading lawn care service providers.*