

Preparing The Lawn For Winter Leads To A Beautiful Spring

(NAPSA)—Homeowners can increase their chances of a great looking lawn next spring by winterizing their lawn this fall.

Weed control, fertilizing, mowing, raking and aerating are all important steps to ensure a desirable lawn in the years to come, advises Briggs & Stratton's Yard Doctor Trey Rogers, Ph.D., a turf-grass expert who serves as a consultant to the engine manufacturer.

"Many of the lawn care troubles homeowners face in the spring, like weeds and poor grass growth, can be avoided by better preparing the lawn for winter," says Dr. Rogers.

Tips from the Yard Doctor on how to best winterize the lawn include:

- Control broadleaf weeds such as the dreaded dandelion in early fall when they germinate. Apply a regular broadleaf herbicide at a low rate because the weeds are still quite small.

- Fertilize in the fall because when a lawn goes dormant in the winter, well-nourished roots will continue to grow in soil temperatures above 35 degrees.

- If grass will be covered by a blanket of snow in the winter, cut the grass a bit shorter than one-third of the grass blade at the end of the mowing season. This will remove leaf blades that turn brown and go dormant during the winter. It will also make the yard look greener earlier in the spring.

- When raking, remove large piles of leaves, twigs and other debris from the lawn. These elements break down slowly, suffocating the lawn and contributing



Yard Doctor Trey Rogers recommends removing twigs and other debris from the lawn before winter to ensure a healthy, beautiful lawn in the spring.

to rot, mold and other diseases. Grind up leaves and return them to the lawn to add nutrients to the soil.

- Aerate in the fall to help break up compacted soil and remove excess thatch, allowing fertilizer nutrients, sunlight and air to infiltrate the soil.

"Remember that too much or too little of something isn't always a good thing," says Dr. Rogers. "The right combination of weed control, fertilizing, mowing, raking and aerating will help ensure that the lawn is ready for next spring and looking better than ever."

Visit www.yarddoctor.com for more tips, including region-specific advice.