

The aim of good maintenance is to keep the grass growing slowly, while remaining healthy and attractive. Proper maintenance usually makes the difference between a good and a poor lawn. It does not correct faulty establishment, but poor maintenance results in a poor lawn regardless of how much care has been taken in the establishment of the lawn. A good lawn requires attention to proper mowing, feeding, watering and other management practices such as weed, disease, and pest control.

Watering a newly sodded lawn:

1. First Week: keep soil and sod moist at all times. During dry spells, you should water the lawn daily or as often as necessary throughout the first week. Water in sufficient quantities to maintain moist soil to a depth of at least 4 inches. Water during the heat of the day to prevent wilting.

2. Second and Subsequent weeks: water the turfgrass sod to maintain adequate moisture in the upper 4 inches of soil. This is necessary for the promotion of deep root growth.

Note: *If roll seams are opening, your turf is shrinking.* This is a sign that the lawn requires more water. Check that water is penetrating well into the subsoil by lifting a corner of a roll.

If your lawn is sodded during the dry season, for the first two days you should saturate the grass until soggy. Water once a day for the next ten days.

Watering a mature lawn:

Water to a depth of six inches. This will probably be necessary every 4 to 7 days, but may vary with the time it takes your lawn to drain.

Avoid evening or late night watering, as this can create conditions for disease.

Do not water on a predetermined schedule, but only as needed, when the first signs of water stress are detectable. When water stress occurs the grass begins to turn slightly blue and footprints persist when you walk on the lawn. *Another term for water stress is wilting.*

If water is in short supply and the grass is allowed to go dormant, do not water to restore growth unless the water can continue in adequate amounts. Once new growth occurs it will suffer serious injury if allowed to dry out again.

Note: *You can measure the amount of water delivered by a sprinkler by setting out an open can within the sprinkler pattern. Measure the depth of water collected in the can. When the water reaches a depth of 1" the lawn has had enough water.*