

Guidelines for Mowing, Fertilizing and Watering Lawns in the Texas Panhandle

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WATERING FACTS

1. Water only when grass shows symptoms of moisture stress (discoloration and wilting). During the summer months water fescue and bluegrass every 4-5 days and bermudagrass every 7 to 10 days.
2. Wet soil thoroughly. With automatic watering systems it is best to water fewer times, but apply more water with each application. This promotes a deep root system and reduces the potential for disease establishment. Do not apply anymore water than can be absorbed by the soil in any single application.
3. Water late evening or early morning to conserve water.
4. Water sloping sites slowly and intermittently to reduce runoff.
5. Drought tolerant grasses (buffalograss and bermudagrass) will survive without watering, but will not maintain green color.
6. Occasional watering is needed during the winter months during prolonged dry periods.

MOWING FACTS

1. Frequent mowing produces the finest turf.
2. Close mowing (below 1") requires frequent mowing.
3. Close mowing requires a reel mower.
4. Best to remove no more than 1/3 of the leaf area at a time.
Proper mowing heights: Bermuda 1-1.5 inches, Fescue 2-2.5 inches, Zoysia 1.5-2.0 inches, Bluegrass 2-2.5 inches.
5. Raise mowing height during summer months to reduce mowing frequency and water use.
6. Raise mowing height in fall to reduce winterkill.
7. Scalping lawns in early spring removes weeds and promotes early green-up.
8. Encourage use of grass clippings for mulch and compost.
9. Mow shaded lawns 1/2 to 1 inch higher than in full sun.
10. Do not remove clippings for several mowings after fertilization.

FERTILIZATION FACTS

1. Avoid excessive fertilization:
3 lbs N/yr max. for fescue and bluegrass
4-5 lbs N/yr max. for bermudagrass lawns
2. Do not apply more than 1.5 lb N in any single application.
3. Avoid high P fertilizers on established lawns.
4. High P levels in the soil will induce Iron deficiency.
5. Apply complete fertilizers in spring and fall.
6. Use slow release nitrogen during summer months.
7. Foliar applications of FeSO_4 are more effective than dry applications.
8. Reduce application rates on shaded lawns.
9. Removing grass clippings increases fertilizer requirements.