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SERVING GLYNN, CAMDEN, MCINTOSH, WAYNE, LIBERTY, BRYAN & CHATHAM COUNTIES | JULY 2020



## Get Ready for the Dog Days of Summer

Even though many of us look forward to summer, the unbearable heat of some days can still chase us inside to hide with the comfort of our air conditioners.

But before the dog days of summer really start howling, you can take steps to prepare your lawn for the hot days ahead.



### EVERYTHING NEEDS WATER

Most lawns need an average of 1" of water per week during the growing season. This spring Mother Nature has helped us with the watering process of our landscapes, but as the summer heat pushes forward the rainfall will decrease and we will again have to add supplemental watering to our lawns. Grass suffering from a lack of moisture will have a bluish cast, and will not spring back after being stepped on. Severe water deprivation will eventually lead to dormancy and a brown lawn. Light sprinklings can actually do more harm than good.

Make sure you water your lawn to a depth of 6" and make the most of every drop, too, by watering during the cooler parts of the day to avoid loss through evaporation. A general rule of thumb is to water between the hours 4am - 10am before the high sun comes out.

## SUN-WORSHIPPING WEEDS

Weed activity increases with the temperature. These hardy villains can survive with less water than grass. By watering deeply, you can support a thick lawn that will crowd out many weeds. It will also help to mow your lawn higher. Taller blades of grass keep the sun from reaching weed seeds and small plants. A longer blade also provides more food for the grass plant.

Disease organisms lie dormant in many soils, until conditions are just right for them to flourish. Periods of hot, humid weather are one of the highest risk times for disease outbreaks. The symptoms of lawn disease can be mistaken for heat stress. Upon closer inspection though, some sort of spotting or banding on the grass blades can be seen. Also, disease will often start in one area and then spread, instead of affecting the entire lawn all at once. So, before the sun starts beating down and you sneak inside for some relief, make sure your lawn is ready for the heat. A healthy lawn is always the best defense against the stresses of summer.



## Summer Landscapes

Summer is here already! Tourists are coming to the Golden Isles to spend their vacation time and their hard earned money. This is the time of the year your commercial properties should be at their best! Whether it is a Resort Hotel, Condominium or shopping center, the first thing people see when they drive or walk up is the landscaping. The outside of the property is a reflection of what is on the inside. Here are some things that can be done to give your property that WOW factor!

- **It is important to keep your property well maintained with a fresh updated look.** Replace older plant material with new material.
- **Always keep turf areas cut and edged and prune all older shrubs and hedges.**
- **Install new mulch or pine straw in planting beds.** A layer two to four inches in depth is recommended. Mulch prevents weeds and helps retain moisture in the soil.
- **With proper fertilizer, turf and shrubs should be greener than any other season of the year.** Multiple fertilizer applications should be applied in the summer months, along with proper irrigation. Ornamentals usually require a second fertilization mid-summer.
- **The most eye catching enhancement to any property is the addition of color.** Summer annuals make a property stand out. Adding color at entrances to properties or at the roadway gets everyone's attention that rides or walks by. The addition of color in planter pots gives that extra pop.

# Mow Like a Pro

**Now that we're in the thick of the summer season, it's time for a few reminders about proper lawn mowing.** By following the tips listed here, you'll be promoting better overall health for your lawn with fewer pest problems to worry about.

**Use a sharp blade.** If you mow with a dull blade, turf tips may end up ragged, eventually bleaching out to an unsightly tan color. This obviously doesn't look good, and it enables disease and insect problems to move in more easily.

**Avoid scalping (or cutting the lawn too short).** Your grass needs its leaves to produce food and to shade and cool the soil. The ideal height for St. Augustine Grass is 2.5 Inches – 3.5 Inches and Centipede Grass 2 – 3 inches during the summer months.

**Follow the 1/3 rule.** Removing more than 1/3 of the grass blade at a time cuts off the food-producing part of the plant, forcing the roots to put their energy into replacing the blade instead of thickening your turf.

**Try grass - recycling.** This refers to returning grass clippings back to the lawn rather than bagging them. You'll be saving yourself some work while helping to improve the environment (grass- recycling cuts down on the amount of yard waste that gets sent to the landfill). As long as you stick to the 1/3 rule, the cuttings shouldn't add to the thatch layer. Plus, they'll put valuable nitrogen back into the soil to promote better growth. Mulching mowers make grass - recycling easy to do.

**Finally, put some variety into your life.** By alternating your mowing pattern each time you mow, your grass won't bend in one direction.



## Landscape Fun Facts

- The term "landscape" was actually a painting term. I guess landscapers can call themselves artists?
- An hour of weeding burns about 300 calories (equivalent to biking at a steady pace) and an hour of pushing a lawn mower burns about 500 calories (equivalent to playing tennis).
- Trees are able to communicate and defend themselves against attacking insects. Scientists have found that trees can flood their leaves with chemicals called phenolics when the insects begin their raid. They can also signal danger to other trees so they can start their own defense.
- A landscape's arrangement doesn't just make things beautiful; it can affect the environment as well as social behaviors.
- A large tree can consume 100 gallons of water out of the ground and discharge it into the air as oxygen and water vapor
- Trees are the longest living organisms on Earth, and never die of old age.
- Brazil was named after a tree. Brazil wood is known for its strong red color used for dyeing and was the colony's first explored resource.
- Hummingbirds must eat every 30 minutes or starve. They eat 2.5 times their body weight – the nectar of several hundred flowers – every day.
- Eighty-five percent of the world's greenery is ocean plant life.
- Bamboo is really a grass and the world's tallest, sometimes growing to 130 feet or more.
- The philodendron, one of the most vigorously climbing houseplants, is named from the Greek word philodendros, which means "loving trees."
- Gardenias and orange blossoms are two plants with heavenly fragrances, but if you put them together in the same bouquet, they neutralize one another's scents, so there's no smell.
- If a birdhouse is hung on a tree branch, it does not move up the tree as the tree grows.



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