

# WATERING

[growinggreenlawns.org](http://growinggreenlawns.org)



It's natural and okay to **let lawns go dormant** during summer and/or drought. Turf will resume growing when weather conditions are favorable. Stay off dormant grass—no foot traffic, mowing, fertilizer, or pesticides.

**If you must water, follow these tips:**

Water when the the lawn develops a blue-gray or purplish tint or when the turf lies down leaving a footprint after being walked on.

The best time to irrigate is early in the morning.

Water slowly and to a depth of 4 to 6 inches. Turn off when puddles or runoff occurs.

Allow to dry between waterings.

▶ For more help, contact your local Cooperative Extension office ([www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension))



## Growing Green Lawns

Designed by Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences in cooperation with the Northeastern Integrated Pest Management Center.

# MOWING

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Set your mower on its highest setting.

Mow frequently when the lawn is actively growing.

Do not use a bag or catcher; leave clippings on the lawn.

Use a sharp blade; sharpen the blade at least once a year.



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## Managing Insect Pests and Diseases in Your Lawn

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Determine the type and amount of damage. Most damage looks the same. Get down on your hands and knees and look closely for insect pests or diseases.

Dig up a small section of turf to look for grubs—the most common pest in northern grasses.

Lawn insect pests and diseases vary throughout the region based on the type of grass.

Most lawns can tolerate some insect pests and diseases. Treating diseases in home lawns is not practical.

Don't apply an insecticide or fungicide if you don't have a problem.

Check with your local extension service or local lawn professional for correct identification and specific recommendations. Most insects are a harmless part of the landscape and not a problem.

Select the proper type of grass for your region to minimize pest and disease problems.

The best defense against problems is to properly water, feed, and follow maintenance practices to avoid stressing the lawn.

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## Feeding Your Lawn

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Feed your lawn to keep it thick and healthy.

Measure the size of your lawn in order to purchase the correct amount of fertilizer.

Purchase a **lawn** fertilizer.

Read and follow the application instructions on the fertilizer bag.

Always apply fertilizer at the spreader setting on the bag. Remaining fertilizer should be put back into the bag.

Sweep any fertilizer off hard surfaces and back onto the lawn.

The number of applications depends on:

- the type of grass you have
- the area of the country in which you live
- soil fertility
- age of the lawn
- whether you leave clippings on the lawn
- how you use your lawn

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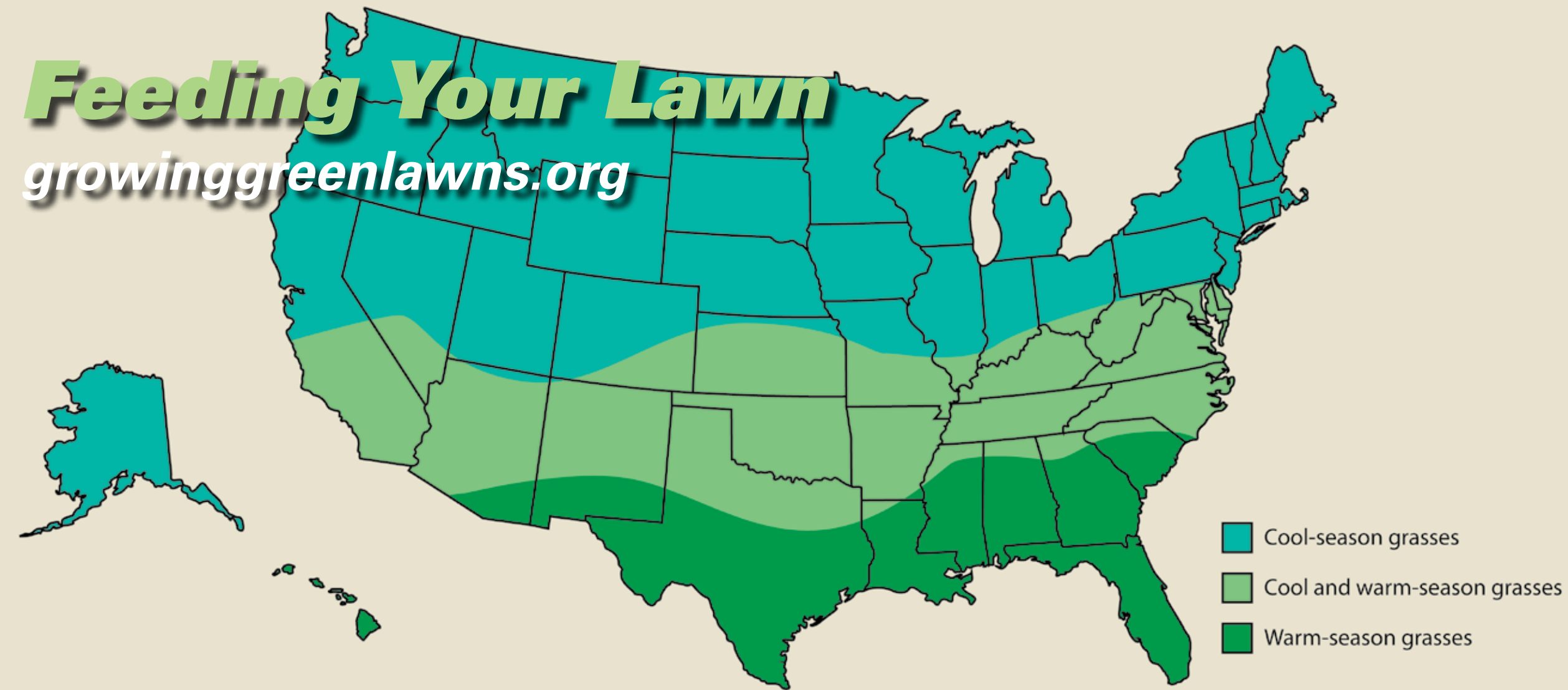
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## Feeding Your Lawn

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Do you know your turf?

Early fall is the most ideal time to fertilize **cool-season** grasses or mixtures of:

- turf-type tall fescue
- Kentucky bluegrass
- perennial ryegrass
- fine fescues

Do not apply fertilizer to frozen ground or dormant lawns.

In the summer during active growth, fertilize **warm-season** grasses:

- Zoysiagrass
- Bermudagrass

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## Controlling Weeds in Your Lawn

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**Dense lawns can outcompete weeds.**

If grass is so thin that the ground is visible, weeds may move in and become established. Weeds may indicate a problem with low mowing height, poor fertility, shade, or watering practices.

**If you are planning to control weeds in your lawn:**

- Select a product labeled for lawn use.

For few weeds: consider hand-pulling or a ready-to-use (RTU) product as a spot treatment.

For many weeds: either treat the entire lawn yourself or hire a professional.

Always follow label instructions for rates, mixing, application method, and safety precautions.

For broadleaf weeds (dandelions, ground ivy, clover, and plantain), apply herbicides in the fall.

For most annual grass weeds (crabgrass), apply a preemergent product in the spring.

**Weed control may not be necessary every year.**

Strive for a thick, competitive lawn to reduce or eliminate the need for using herbicides. Treat weeds only as necessary.

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# BENEFITS OF LAWNS

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## Your lawn's many uses include:

- Part of your landscape that can increase the value of your home.
- A place for kids and pets to play.
- An area for families and friends to gather.
- A pleasing, safe, open space around your home.

## Your lawn's environment benefits include:

- Erosion control.
- Noise and glare reduction.
- Rainwater and pollutant (dust, dirt, smoke, chemicals) filter.
- Habitat for beneficials.
- Energy efficiency (based on a 10,000 square-foot lawn)
  - Can absorb more than 6,000 gallons of water from a rainfall event.
  - Can cool about nine average homes.

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# GROWING GREEN GRASS

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Lawn care is not complicated. Making simple, easy changes in your lawn maintenance can provide you with the type of lawn desired.

## Mow Right!

- Mow high. Set the mower on the highest setting.
- Leave clippings on lawn (do not use bag or catcher).
- Use a sharp blade (sharpen blade at least one time per year).

## Feed Right!

- Choose a fertilizer designed for lawns.
- Read and FOLLOW the directions on the bag.
- Sweep products off hard surfaces into the lawn.

## Water Right!

- It is okay to leave lawns go dormant in the summer.
- Cool-season lawns do not need to be watered in the summer.
- The best time to water is early morning.
- Do not overwater.

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## Growing Green Lawns

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# Regional Integrated Pest Management Centers



Connecticut  
Delaware  
District of Columbia  
Maine  
Maryland  
Massachusetts  
New Hampshire  
New Jersey  
New York  
Pennsylvania  
Rhode Island  
Vermont  
West Virginia

The Northeastern and North Central Integrated Pest Management

Centers are part of a nationwide system that provides broad access

to reliable pest management information. They focus IPM team-building

efforts, communication networks, and stakeholder participation in

each region.



Illinois  
Indiana  
Iowa  
Kansas  
Michigan  
Minnesota  
Missouri  
Nebraska  
North Dakota  
Ohio  
South Dakota  
Wisconsin

The Northeastern Integrated Pest Management Center was established in 2001. Members work

to promote environmentally sound solutions to home and garden pest problems. Members:

University of Maryland, Penn State University, Cornell, and University of Rhode Island, the

Environmental Protection Agency, Longwood Gardens, Audubon International, and Rivard's

Resources IPM Environmental Management Consultants. Partners: the North Central Integrated

Pest Management Center, Scotts Miracle-Gro Company, Regions I and III Water Quality.

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The Centers are supported by the USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES)

**[www.northeastipm.org](http://www.northeastipm.org) • [www.ncipmc.org](http://www.ncipmc.org)**



## Regional IPM Center Displays

The goals of the displays are to highlight poor gardening practices and help consumers make changes that will benefit them and the environment. The “Landscape Bloopers” display illustrates common landscaping mistakes. The “Growing Green Lawns” display utilizes best management practices to solve common lawn problems. Display content is the result of a national collaborative effort to build consensus among land grant universities, environmental groups, government, and private industry. Both displays utilize Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques. IPM helps protect water, people, pest, plants, and our planet.

The **Northeastern Integrated Pest Management Center’s Community IPM Working Group** members collaborate to promote effective environmentally sound solutions to home and garden pest problems. **Working Group Members:** University of Maryland, Penn State University, Cornell, and University of Rhode Island, the Environmental Protection Agency, Longwood Gardens, Audubon International, and Rivard’s Resources IPM Environmental Management Consultants. **Working Group Partners:** the North Central Integrated Pest Management Center, Scotts Miracle-Gro Company, Regions I and III Water Quality. The **North Central Integrated Pest Management Center’s** recently formed **Consumer Horticulture Working Group** plans to collaborate with the Community IPM Working Group from the NEIPM Center to continue to provide information to consumers about good lawn care practices. The NC IPM Center working group members currently included representatives from University of Wisconsin, South Dakota State University, North Dakota State University, The Ohio State University, Michigan State University, University of Illinois and University of Minnesota.

The Northeastern Integrated Pest Management Center (<http://northeastipm.org>), and North Central Integrated Pest Management Center (<http://www.ncipmc.org>) are part of a nationwide system of four Regional Centers that provide broad access to reliable pest management information. The Centers focus on IPM team-building efforts, communication networks, and stakeholder participation in each region. The Centers are supported by the USDA’s Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES).

### Where to get Information:

[growinggreenlawns.org](http://growinggreenlawns.org) – provides a central location for people to go to for specific information on lawn care.

[csrees.usda.gov/extension](http://csrees.usda.gov/extension) – locate your local cooperative extension office.

### Contact information:

**Mary Kay Malinoski**, University of Maryland, Home and Garden Information Center, [mkmal@umd.edu](mailto:mkmal@umd.edu), 410-531-5568

**Rick Johnson**, Pennsylvania State University, Pesticide Education Program, [rhj3@psu.edu](mailto:rhj3@psu.edu), 814-865-8080

**Sue Ratcliffe**, Director, North Central IPM Center, UIUC, [sratclif@uiuc.edu](mailto:sratclif@uiuc.edu), 217-333-9656

**David Clement**, University of Maryland Home and Garden Information Center, University of Maryland, [clement@umd.edu](mailto:clement@umd.edu), 410-531-5556

## Display #1 – Typical Landscape Mistakes:

### Landscape Bloopers

#### Pesticides:

**Beyond the Cabinet Door:** Improper Storage of pesticides and poisons

**Little Miss Application:** More is not better, over use of products

**Collateral Damage:** Off target application

**Quick Fix:** Choosing the wrong products

#### Pest Management:

**A Case of Mistaken Identity:** A myth that all insects are pests

**Guess Who's Coming to Dinner:** If you plant it they will come

#### Landscaping:

**Anatomy of a Murder:** Topping Trees

**Shear Terror:** Improper Pruning

**All the right cuts:** Why Prune

**Dude! Where's my house?** Improper Plant selection and placement

**In Too Deep:** Improper Planting

**Buried Alive:** Improper Mulching

#### Lawns:

**A Mower Runs Through it Part I**

**Shredded and Low:** Mowing too Low

**Ripping-n-Tearing:** Using a Dull Mower Blade

**A Mower Runs Through it Part II**

**The Lawn Jungle:** Not mowing often enough

**Bagging Grass Clippings:** Don't bag clippings

## Display #2 – Sustainable Lawn Care

### Growing Green Lawns

**Benefits of Lawns:** many uses and environmental benefits of lawns

**Growing Green Grass:** mow right feed right, and water right

**Mowing:** correct mowing practices

**Watering:** water conservation tips

**Feeding:** sustainable fertilizing practices

**Weeds:** smart ways to manage weeds

**Insects and Diseases:** common sense solutions