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It is Time to Fertilize Warm-Season Grass

The best time to fertilize your lawn is when it is actively growing. For warm-season grass, like bermuda grass, zoysia grass, and buffalo grass, that time is now. As our days start getting hotter, these warm-season grasses start to take off!

When you fertilize your lawn, you mainly want to focus on nitrogen. Phosphorus and potassium should only be added to lawns when a soil test indicates it is needed. Nitrogen, however, can be applied annually. The amount of nitrogen you apply depends on the type of grass, and what you want from your lawn.

Bermuda grass needs about one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet every four weeks between May and mid-August. You do not want to apply more than 4 pounds of nitrogen total in a year. Either slow or quick-release nitrogen will work for these applications.

Zoysia grass, however, requires less nitrogen. Zoysia grass is prone to developing a thick thatch that can impair its growth. To help avoid this, do not apply more than 2 pounds of nitrogen in a year. The best approach is applying $\frac{3}{4}$ to one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet in two applications: one in June and one in mid-July. Slow-release nitrogen is preferable for these applications.

Buffalo grass will survive without supplemental nitrogen, but providing it will improve the color and density of the lawn. To enhance your buffalo grass, apply one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet sometime between now and early June. If a darker green is desired, follow the same fertilizer recommendations as zoysia grass, not applying more than 2 pounds total.

Make sure not to apply fertilizer to your warm-season lawn past August 15th. If these grasses receive fertilizer late in the summer, it will stimulate new growth that will be susceptible to damage from cold fall temperatures.

If you have questions or concerns about your lawn fertilization schedule, or you would like to get a soil test done, contact us for more information.