



## Turfgrass Maintenance Guidelines for Established Lawns

### *Buffalograss*

*The following are general guidelines for maintaining buffalograss as a manicured lawn in the St. Louis area. Please note that the guidelines refer to established lawns. For care of new sod, refer to our brochure: Watering New Turfgrass Sod.*

#### **WATERING**

Once established, Buffalograss can go extended periods without water. Water as needed to achieve desired turf quality. Mature buffalograss should receive deep, infrequent waterings, every 10-14 days. Watering too frequently will result in shallow roots and weaker turf. Ideally, water in the early morning to minimize evaporation. Remember – you need to maintain soil moisture even during dormancy.

Water requirements may vary from lawn to lawn due to soil conditions, terrain, etc. In order to practice responsible water use, you should learn to recognize signs of dry turfgrass. Buffalograss in need of water will have a grayish-purple cast, rather than its normal blue-green color. The grass blades may also shrivel and begin to turn brown. Turfgrass in this condition should be watered immediately. Inspecting your lawn frequently will help to detect water requirements for your lawn and to avoid over- or under-watering. Consult our watering guide for greater detail.

#### **MOWING & EDGING**

Grass should be mowed on a regular basis during its growing season. Optimal mowing height for residential lawns is 1" to 3". Keep mower blades sharp for a clean cut. In low-maintenance areas, buffalograss can survive without mowing.

Be sure to edge along concrete and landscaped areas regularly. To keep buffalograss out of undesired areas, create physical barriers and/or edge frequently during growing season

#### **FERTILIZATION**

Fertilizer should be applied 2-3 times per year, depending on desired turf quality. Always use a high-quality turf-grade fertilizer. Use a rotary-type spreader for best results. Apply in two different directions to avoid streaking. Fertilizer should be watered in immediately. To maintain color, light applications of nitrogen fertilizer (1/2 recommended rate) may be applied between the recommended applications. Only apply if unsatisfied with turf color.

May 15 – June 1	Apply a balanced fertilizer (such as 12-12-12) at the recommended rate. Or apply an organic product, such as Milorganite or Nature Safe at 1 ½ to 2 times the recommended rate.
July 1 – July 15	Apply a fertilizer with higher nitrogen content (such as 24-3-8) at the recommended rate. Use slow-release if available.
August 15 – September 1	Apply a balanced fertilizer (such as 12-12-12) at the recommended rate. Or apply an organic product at the recommended rate.

#### **WEED, INSECT, AND DISEASE CONTROL**

Use crabgrass pre-emergent control *without* fertilizer around April 15th. Broadleaf weeds (clover, dandelion, ivy, thistle, etc.) may be controlled with granular or sprayable products. Herbicides may cause temporary discoloration. Granular products must be applied in morning when there is dew on the grass. Sprayable products are ideal when weed pressure is sporadic. Grassy weeds can also be spot-sprayed, but usually require different products than broadleaf weeds. When spot-spraying, be careful to apply at proper rates, as to not damage the turf. Herbicides should be avoided when temperatures exceed 90°F. To control white grubs and other insects, apply insecticide with the active ingredient "imidacloprid" between June 15<sup>th</sup> and July 15<sup>th</sup>. Timing is important for effective control. Be sure to water in. Under proper watering and fertilization, buffalograss should experience little to no disease pressure.