

September 2008

Lawn Care

Insecticide

At this time of year, homeowners should keep an eye on their lawns. Many lawns are prone to insects, and fungus. What do you see? If you notice your lawn developing small patches of dying grass, with no rhyme or reason...most likely you do have an infestation of some sort. Follow instructions on any insecticide label. Please note that most insecticides require a second lawn treatment 10-12 days later to kill developing larvae.

Fungus can occur often when your lawn remains wet for long periods of time.

In other words, the Univ. of FL., having researched lawn fungus, has determined that the OPTIMUM time to water is early morning. When you water in the morning, your lawn may benefit from additional water in the form of dew. A soaking in the morning will also guarantee that the lawn will have the opportunity to dry out during the day (if it isn't raining). Granular fungicides are now available in the garden department of most home improvement stores. Fungus can appear as brown spots, or black on the blades of grass. Your lawn may be too wet, too often.

Sprinkler Systems

Try to remember to shut off your sprinkler system if it is raining the day before you are set to water. Most sprinkler timers have a toggle switch, which when kept in the middle is the off position. Remember to also turn your sprinkler on, once rains have stopped for a period of 3 or more days. Make certain sprinkler heads are free to pop up and operate. Also check the heads to make certain they are not clogged.

Fertilizer

Fertilization should be done if you feel your lawn is looking a little sour in color. If you prefer a hearty green color to your lawn, there is a product which you can safely use during these intense hot and humid days. Don't overload your lawn with a Nitrogen rich fertilizer (the first of three numbers on a bag of fertilizer). Anything more than 15, as the first number when purchasing fertilizer is excessive.

Using an Ironizer will green up your lawn and will not make it grow any faster. Which brings me to another point. We are cutting our lawn on a weekly basis to keep weeds from going to seed. If you are seeing seed heads of any sort in your lawn, your lawn is not being cut often enough. The only way to keep weeds in check at this time of year is to cut more frequently. Speak to your lawn maintenance company to make a correction.

**PALM ALERT**

Unfortunately from time to time in South Florida a disease named, " Lethal Yellow" rears it's head. Anyone who walks or bikes thru the neighborhood may have noticed many palms failing. I have heard that Coconut, and Christmas Palms are prone to the disease. There is no treatment for this disease once a palm contracts it. Many homeowners have been proactive in removing the dead or dying palms. If you have one such plant please get rid of it. High winds can spread the disease.

What can homeowners with palms do to prevent an attack? If we as people can keep our immune and defenses strong, we can avoid at times getting sick. I'd like to think that perhaps by boosting a palms defenses perhaps it too will be able to defend itself. Use a palm and tropical fertilizer at least 4 times a year. If we have long periods of drought make certain the palm is getting some irrigation. Even a well established palm will need water during a

drought. If any of your palms fronds(leaves) are showing signs of stress then you could fertilize immediately.

Yellow, lime green, stunted fronds, or frizzy fronds are all signs of STRESS. Most PALMS are dark, rich green, with full, long fronds.

Trimming

If and when a tropical storm warning is issued or if a tropical storm is possibly heading toward our coast. Please, pretty please don't have a drive by guy trim your trees. Not unless you are prepared to haul the trimmings into your garage.

Be kind to your neighbors, trimmings today can be left curbside for weeks as the county suspends pick ups during storms. In fact the trimmings can become projectiles. T.S.Warning, please don't trim.

Do trim, or cut down coconuts as they can really injure a person.

An questions, please feel free to contact me.

Happy Gardening,

Joy Schwartz