



Environmentally Sound Practices for Compacted Soils in Shade

(Compacted soils are our most common type of soils in a metro area)

| | | Turfgrass Quality Expectations..... | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---------|----------|
| | | Minimal | Average | High |
| Water | During first growing season after seeding or sodding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ½ inch/week of rain or water ▪ Water slowly or at shorter intervals to aid water infiltration into soil (These soils are more prone to water runoff that likely carry pollutants) ▪ Turfgrass does not need to be dark green to be healthy. If your footsteps show or if it turns a blue-gray color this indicates time to water. ▪ During first growing season after seeding or sodding | | X |
| Conserve Water | No action | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Calibrate irrigation system ▪ Adjust sprinklers. Don't let water land on hard surfaces. ▪ Follow City watering bans ▪ Water during coolest part of the day. Early morning is best this is especially true for shaded areas ▪ Water with large drops, close to ground, reduce evaporation ▪ Install rain & soil moisture sensors on irrigation systems | | X |
| Mower height |3+ inches with sharp blade..... | | | X |
| Clippings |Leave on lawn*, sweep off street..... | | | X |
| Fall leaves | Mow. If turfgrass is not visible through the leaf cover then rake prior to mowing. | | | X |
| Core aerate | None or occasionally | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Once in fall. More often will help reduce compaction & create more permeable soils ▪ 20 – 40 holes per sq/ft* ▪ Be careful to avoid surface or subsurface tree roots. It harms the tree & your equipment ▪ No aeration when ground is dry, grass is stressed or temps are hot or predicted hot within a week | | X |
| Seed type | Shady mix of perennial fine fescues & shade tolerant bluegrasses | | | X |
| Seeding time | Best: mid-August – mid-September. Next best: early spring. Avoid mid-May – late July when the shade canopy will be fullest making it most difficult to grow turfgrass | | | X |
| Traffic tolerance |Low..... | | | X |

X – Not Practical

* - for more information see DETAIL PAGE



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| | Minimal | Average | High |
| Weed control | None. Where turfgrass is very thin, mix in other shade loving plants* to help prevent soil erosion. Mow to make weeds less obvious. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow pesticide labels; they are the law. ▪ Minimal, spot treatment if any. Use of herbicides can cause bare spots that often fill in with more weeds due to the poor conditions for growing turf ▪ Bare spots: Light shade, reseed with a shady lawn mix. For heavier shade, consider mulches or adding shade loving plants* for a better adapted & often more dense ground cover. Turfgrass is poorly adapted to dense shade ▪ Avoid use of weed/feed mixes, the needs & timing for weed control may be different from that of supplying nutrients. This will reduce herbicide injury to nearby desirable plants ▪ Minimize broadleaf herbicide use due to the possibility of injury to trees, shrubs & other desirable broadleaf plants ▪ Option: Mow to make weeds less obvious. | X |
| Fertilizer tips | None | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Granular: Use drop spreader or shield by edges. Fill spreader on dry hard surface, spills can be swept up ▪ Liquid: fill on grassy area, dilute spills with watering ▪ Apply in cross pattern, ½ ↑ direction, ½ → direction | X |
| Correct fertilizer |Take soil test, follow recommendations for fertilizer use..... | | |
| Next best fertilizer | 1/2 - 1 pound N per 1000 sq/ft once a year near Labor Day (35-50% of the N slow release*) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 pound Nitrogen (N) per 1000 sq/feet, once a year near Labor Day, (35-50% of the N should be slow release*) ▪ Law requires 0% phosphorus (P)* ▪ Typically an N-P-K ratio of 4-0-2 or 4-0-3 is a good for MN. | X |
| Trees | No action | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leaf trees: Often best recommendations for tree health conflicts with best recommendations for turfgrass health. ▪ For turfgrass health: Thin branches to gain more filtered sunlight, remove lower branches to promote air circulation near ground & ease mowing. Consider mulching under tree canopy to keep mowers away from trunk & exposed roots. ▪ Needle trees: Do not remove lower branches. Mow around tree. Consider mulching under tree branches. | X |