



# NUTRI LAWN Inc.

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## RP5 Newsletter 2019 Early Fall

We made it through the summer! Although to be honest this was one of the more mild summers we've seen in awhile. That's not to say it didn't come with it's own challenges, even the most mild of North Valley summers still sees temperatures that push our cool season lawns to their limit.

We sometimes refer to Round 5 as the 'Home Free Round'. Longer, cooler nights reduce the summer stress on cool season lawns. This feeding could also be called the Payback Round. Cool season turf experiences summer root decline from June through August in the hot North Valley. Unable to photosynthesize efficiently due to heat stress, our lawns borrow energy from their root reserves, thus reducing root mass, sometimes upwards of 50%. A late summer/early fall feeding encourages the recovering grass to allocate energy towards root growth - the payback. Have you ever noticed that spring fertilization creates a lot of top growth? This is because the lawn wants to grow tall and spread its progeny (seed). Fall feeding prepares the perennial lawn for storage for the winter ahead.

For this application we will be feeding your lawns with NutriLawn's special blend of granular fertilizers. We'll also complete selective weed control and be on the lookout for pests, particularly the white grub.

### Now Servicing Forest Ranch

We've started a new route in the Forest Ranch area. We'll be offering the same services we provide for the rest of our routes, so if you or someone you know is in need of lawn or ornamental care, please give us a call. We'll complete a free analysis as usual.

### Shrub Services

Late September/early October is the time for shrub and groundcover fertilization. Our foliar fall fertilization can help your shrubs and groundcover recover from the stress of summer. It is also time for shrub bed pre-emergent to prevent fall and winter annual weeds in your shrub beds and landscaped areas. The cost for either service starts at only \$75. It's as simple as a phone call to our office to set it up. If you already have our shrub services, we will be out again soon.

### Sticky Drip

If you experienced landscape trees bombarding your walks, patio furniture, or parked cars with tiny droplets of sap this summer, your tree probably had an aphid infestation. We can solve the problem for next year with our pressurized soil injection system which utilizes a control agent that targets only the insects which feed on your tree's sap. We perform this service in December and January before the tree initiates spring growth. If you want to say goodbye to the sticky drip, please call or email. Remember, we need authorization each year!

### Mow Days

Grumpy gardeners are no fun. If we service on mow days they are understandably upset - we don't like to step on anyone's toes, and trying to work around each other can be frustrating. It's simple to let us know when there is a change in your regular mow day (leave a message on voicemail or use e-mail). We can schedule your appointment on a different day or at a different time so you'll have a happy gardener and a happy lawn.

### Speaking of Payback...

Late summer/early fall is a great time to cut spent blossoms off your perennials. After deadheading, give them a shot of compost. You could be rewarded with a second bloom before winter dormancy.

### Seasonal Water Usage

Late summer and fall lawn watering requires adjustments from your summer schedule. Cool evenings, warm days, "Indian Summers", north winds, etc. create changing conditions that call for fluctuating water usage. The keynote here is that your turf water usage should start to decrease as the weather cools. A variety of factors, i.e., rooting depth, slope, turf type, etc., determine how often you water, but keep in mind the amount of total irrigation needs to be reduced this time of year. Check your lawn frequently and remember regardless of how often you water, to always water to the depth of the roots. The good ol' screwdriver test will help immensely.

### Irrigation Repairs

It's important for those of you who are planning on seeding this fall to make sure your irrigation system is performing well before putting down seed. Uniformity issues may prevent the seed from taking root in the drier areas of your lawn caused by uneven coverage. If you would like to call in a professional to work on your irrigation coverage or make repairs, you can contact **Chip Peyton with Peyton Irrigation at (530) 521-2133**.

### Spot Seeding

If you're planning to repair a thin or dead spot in your lawn, then Sept 15 - October 15 is the time. Favorable temperatures, warm days, and cooler nights provide the seed the perfect environment for rapid germination and growth. Ideally the newly seeded areas will have matured by early spring and can receive a crabgrass prevention treatment at that time. Newly seeded turf must have been mowed at least twice before application of a pre-emergent barrier to ensure the lawn will not be adversely affected by the preventative product. If crabgrass has been a problem for you or your neighbors, then fall seeding between Sept 15 - Oct 15 is a must.

- ◆ **Irrigation System** - For spot seeding, make sure your irrigation coverage is adequate. Now is the time to check!
- ◆ **Seed Choice** - When you choose your seed, pick a hardy seed variety. Most North Valley lawns are dwarf tall fescue. Don't use mixes that contain patchgrasses such as Creeping Red Fescue which are often sold in box stores. They are usually a blend of seed that performs poorly in our hot summers or has varying grass textures. If you are having a hard time finding a source for seed, feel free to call our office. We can sell you seed at low cost.
- ◆ **Seed to Soil Contact** - The seed must touch dirt to germinate. Rake out the dead grass and lightly rough up the soil surface or carefully use a weed eater to take the old grass down to dirt.
- ◆ **Seed Rate** - 7-10 pounds of tall fescue seed per 1000 square feet is an adequate seeding rate (or 1 pound of seed per 100 square feet for smaller areas).
- ◆ **Mulch** - After spreading the seed, cover it with 1/4" of mulch (not any more than that!). This helps retain moisture in the soil.
- ◆ **Watering** - Keep the seeded area moist with 3-5 light irrigations a day until the seed has germinated and is at least 1 inch tall. At this point you can begin to taper off the frequency, maybe once a day until the first mowing. You will know it is safe to mow when the grass is 2 - 3 inches tall and the roots seem well anchored. At this point, just monitor your new grass to see if your normal lawn irrigation program and frequency is adequate.