

Virginia Cooperative Extension

A partnership of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University



Grass Roots 2013

 VirginiaTech
College of Agriculture
and Life Sciences



Chesterfield County Office

P.O. Box 146
Chesterfield, VA 23832
804/751-4401 Fax: 804/751-0515
<http://offices.ext.vt.edu/chesterfield>

Dear Chesterfield County Resident:

Thank you for your interest in the Grass Roots program. This program is designed to offer you an individualized plan for establishing and maintaining a healthy lawn while protecting our watershed. It involves a home visit by one of our trained Master Gardener volunteers who will collect a soil sample and measure square footage and other parameters of your lawn. Following soil collection and lab analysis, a certified nutrient management planner will write your personalized plan, based on soil test results and lawn evaluation. The report addresses liming and fertilizing needs, soil compaction and weed control recommendations. You will receive a Grass Roots lawn care guide with your report, and over the next year you will receive four quarterly email newsletters, which will keep you updated on maintenance and preventative measures each season.

Please note:

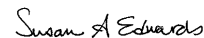
- Applications must be received by June 1, 2013. Registration is limited to the first 400 residents who reply; please register early to reserve your spot in the program.
- Grass Roots recommendations cover the span of two years. In order to accommodate as many residents as possible, applicants who have participated in the 2012 season of Grass Roots may not be accepted into the 2013 program.
- Soil samples are limited to lawn areas only, with a maximum of 3 soil samples per residence. If you are interested in soil testing your garden or landscape, please contact our office for more information.
- Site evaluations will take place March - July 2013. We cannot state a specific date for your site evaluation, only that it will be completed by August 1, 2013. You will receive your lawn care recommendations in plenty of time to seed and fertilize cool-season lawns this fall.
- Follow-up lawn re-measurements will be conducted at random for program quality assurance/control during this same time period.
- You need not be present for the evaluation; recommendations will be provided in your report, not on-site, as recommendations depend upon soil analysis results.

If you would like to participate in this program please complete the enclosed registration and presurvey. The information you provide in the presurvey is crucial to evaluating the performance and continuation of the Grass Roots program, so we ask that you answer the questions as completely as possible.

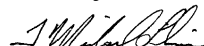
The program fee is \$25 and covers the cost of supplies, materials, and one soil test. Additional samples, if desired are \$11 each. Please return your registration/presurvey along with your check for the correct amount made payable to **Treasurer, Chesterfield County**. Please mail registration materials to our office at the post office box address listed above.

Thank you for your interest, and we look forward to serving you this season!

Sincerely,


Susan A. Edwards
ANR Technician
Grass Roots Coordinator

Sincerely,


T. Michael Likins
County Agent
Director of Extension Services,
Chesterfield County

www.ext.vt.edu

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Did You Know...

Free Fertilizer! Leaving your grass clippings on your lawn each time you mow can provide the nutrients equal to one fertilizer application

Fescue Clippings = No Thatch Grass clippings are 90% water and break down quickly – fescue grass clippings do not contribute to thatch

Mow Right – 2.5-4" Height! Fescue lawns are happiest when mowed to 2.5 – 4" high – cut any shorter and root development decreases – along with the health of your lawn!

Avoid Brown Patch By... Fertilizing S-O-N only. Fertilizing in the SPRING can contribute to BROWN PATCH developing in the summer.

Avoid Brown Patch By... Watering before 11 AM. It takes a while for grass blades to dry. Damp grass in the afternoon/evening contributes to BROWN PATCH!!

Water Deep & Infrequent For:

DEEP healthy roots

Less Weeds

A Brown Patch Free Lawn

Remember: ½" TWICE A WEEK ONLY!

LAWN CARE PRACTICES EFFECT WATER QUALITY!

Be a responsible homeowner and resident of the Chesapeake Watershed – avoid runoff from your lawn by applying chemicals and irrigating properly.

Grass Needs ONE INCH OF WATER PER WEEK

No more, no less. Adjust your sprinklers to account for rainfall

Get Your Money's Worth! Fertilizers don't work when pH is really out of whack. Grasses like pH at 6.2-6.5 – fix your pH first to get maximum benefits from your fertilizer.

Are Your Roots Getting Enough Air? Core aeration, not spike aeration, increases the air exchange in your soil for good root growth. The ideal soil environment is 45% soil, 5% organic matter, 25% air and 25% water.

Better Soil = Better Grass Topdress your lawn with ¼ to ½ inch of compost or topsoil to build soil structure. Over time, these topdressings alleviate soil compaction, and improve drainage, air exchange and root development.

Sprinkler Calibration is Easy:

Place several shallow cans (like tuna cans) throughout the lawn. Turn on the irrigation. Time how long it takes to fill the cans one-half inch. This is the length of time to set your sprinklers to water. Water twice a week.

Be Patient! Depending on the condition of your lawn, it may be several seasons before you see great results from your Grass Roots recommendations. But keep at it – your hard work will pay off!

We're Here For You!! If you need further assistance or have questions about your lawn, give us a call!

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751-4401**

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Client ID #:

For office use only

Grass Roots 2013 Registration and Client Presurvey

Chesterfield County Office

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Chesterfield, VA 23832

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CLIENT REGISTRATION

Name _____ Phone Day # _____
Address _____ Phone Evening# _____
City/ Zip _____
Subdivision _____
Email address (required to receive newsletters): _____

As a participant in the Grass Roots Program, I give my permission for a representative from the Chesterfield Cooperative Extension Office to come onto my property to collect soil samples and lawn measurements, and possibly make a second visit to remeasure the lawn (for program quality assurance/control). I understand that these site visits may take place sometime between March 1, 2013 and July 31, 2013. I understand that the program cost is \$25, which includes one soil sample and additional samples cost \$11 each. I have enclosed my check (made payable to Treasurer, Chesterfield County) in the appropriate amount with this application.

Signature (required): _____ Date _____

RESIDENCE

- How long have you lived at this address? ___ years ___ mos.
- Do you keep any pets outdoors while you are not at home? ___ yes ___ no **For the safety of our volunteers, we reserve the right to forego sampling and evaluating properties where pets are left outside.**
- What is the primary function of you lawn? ___ ornamental ___ children's play area
___ open space for pets ___ other: _____
- Does your lawn receive (circle your answer): **full sun** (6+ hours of directly sunlight daily) **part sun** (4-6 hours of direct sunlight daily) or is **shaded** (less than 4 hours direct sunlight daily)
- Would you consider reducing the size of your lawn? ___ yes ___ no

GRASS TYPE

- I have a (select one) ___ cool-season (fescue, bluegrass) lawn
___ warm-season (zoysia, bermudagrass) lawn

Not Sure? Here's a hint:

Warm-season lawns go dormant in the winter and turn a straw color; cool-season lawns do not

- If you have a mix of both types: (select **ONE** option below)

I plan to manage my lawn as a ___ cool-season lawn ___ warm-season lawn

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Presurvey Questions
The following questions help us evaluate the impact of our programming.
Please answer all questions to the best of your ability.

PAST SOIL TESTING

- Have you tested your soil in the past 2-3 years? ___ yes ___ no
 - If yes, please answer the following:
 - When? _____
 - Was it through the Grass Roots program? ___ yes ___ no
 - If you have previously participated in Grass Roots, is your lawn area (square footage) the same as - less than - greater than it was during your last Grass Roots evaluation? (please circle the correct answer above)

NUMBER OF SOIL SAMPLES (select ONE of the following two choices):

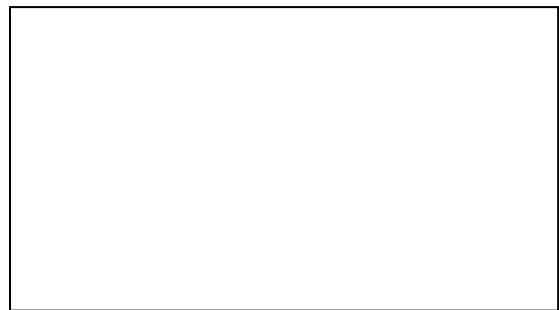
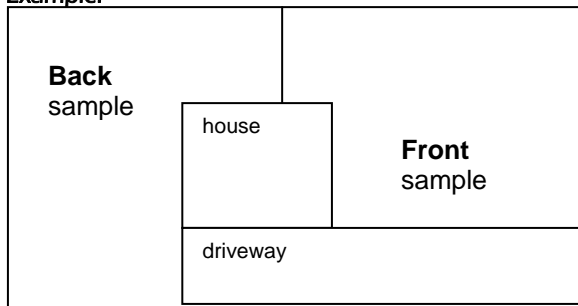
- ___ I would like one soil sample submitted to the lab which represents all lawn areas
- OR**
- ___ I would like separate soil samples submitted from each of the following (check all that apply):
___ front lawn ___ back lawn ___ other lawn; please describe: _____
TOTAL NUMBER OF SOIL SAMPLES (maximum 3 per residence) = _____

PLEASE NOTE: LAWN SAMPLES ONLY; ADDITIONAL SOIL SAMPLES COST \$11 EACH

Do you need more than one sample? Yes if: you manage your lawns differently (ex: fertilize and lime your front yard regularly but not the back yard), if your soil has been amended in one yard and not the other (ex: topsoil brought in for front yard but not back yard), or you have trouble growing grass in one yard but not the other. Each sample consists of many soil plugs taken throughout your entire lawn; it is a composite sample to represent the whole lawn area.

- If you would like soil samples submitted from separate lawn areas, please delineate below how you would like the samples split.

Example:



MOWING

- I mow my grass to a height of: ___ more than 3" ___ 2-3" ___ less than 2"
- Do you remove grass clippings from the lawn? ___ yes ___ no
 - If yes, do you ___ compost clippings ___ throw clippings in trash

**THANK YOU! A MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER
WILL BE IN TOUCH TO SCHEDULE YOUR SITE VISIT**

Presurvey Questions
The following questions help us evaluate the impact of our programming.
Please answer all questions to the best of your ability.

IRRIGATION/WATERING

- Do you water your lawn? ___ yes ___ no
 - If yes, how much (in inches) and how frequent? _____ times a week, _____ inches each time = _____ inches per week. (or _____ minutes each time, _____ times a week)
- Do you measure natural rainfall and adjust your irrigation schedule according? ___ yes ___ no
- Do you have an irrigation (sprinkler) system installed in your lawn? ___ yes ___ no
 - If yes, please answer the following:
 - Do you irrigate on a timer? ___ yes ___ no
 - Have you calibrated your sprinklers? ___ yes ___ no

SOIL AMENDMENT / LIME / FERTILIZER

- Do you know the square footage (area) of your lawn? ___ yes ___ no
- Have you added compost or topsoil to your lawn? If so, please provide the following information: type (compost or topsoil), date applied, amount, location (ex: entire lawn, front lawn only, etc).

- Do you core-aerate (remove plugs of soil from the lawn) your lawn annually? ___ yes ___ no
- Have you adjusted the pH of your soil in the past year? ___ yes ___ no
 - If yes, please answer the following:
 - Did you add ___ lime (raise pH) or ___ sulfur (lower pH)?
 - How much (in lbs.) did you spread over your entire lawn? _____
- Have you fertilized your lawn in the past 12 months? ___ yes ___ no
- Check all seasons in which you typically fertilize your lawn:

___ Spring (Mar–May)	___ Summer (Jun–Aug)	___ Fall (Sep–Nov)	___ Winter (Dec–Feb)
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- How many fertilizer applications do you make per calendar year? _____

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- Do you sweep lawn products (fertilizer, weed control) off sidewalks/driveways and back onto the lawn? ___ yes ___ no
- How do you manage leaves in the lawn? ___ mulch leaves directly into lawn ___ collect and bag (trash) ___ collect and use in landscape/compost
- Do you diagnose lawn problems (insect, disease, etc) before applying chemicals or apply as a preventative? ___ only apply if problem is diagnosed and chemical necessary ___ as a preventative
- When using chemicals (fertilizer, weed control and other pesticides) in the landscape, do you read the label first and follow all label directions? ___ yes ___ no

**THANK YOU! A MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER
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