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Preparing for a Beautiful Lawn

Creating a beautiful lawn is much like laying the foundation for a house. Without a good base to start, the top soil will not be pretty. Consider what it is you are looking for in your lawn and this will help guide your prep work. The more you put into the preparation, the better returns you'll receive in the end.

Weed Control

Spray any weeds with a broad spectrum weed control. Make sure this does not have any residual effect on the soil for more than 2-7 days. Generally, there is no need to remove the sod or weed as long as they are dead. They will decay and add to the organic matter in your soils. Consider having your soils tested by a reputable lab for general nutrient/soil requirements.

Tilling

Prepare the soil by roto-tilling to a depth of 4-6 inches. If your soils are low on organic matter (most are), till in some quality compost materials. This compost is a way to feed your soil. This is a good time to work in some limestone, additional nutrients and organic matter indicated from soil tests.

Grading

Establish your rough grade by raking and leveling the soil. To eliminate drainage problems, slope soil away from foundations, etc. Grade edges to approximately 1/4" below sidewalks, driveways and patios to provide a smooth transition onto the new lawn. Use a lawn roller if necessary to firm grade. This is the point that you will want to install an automated irrigation system if planned. Finish grade for smooth transitions.

Waiting

This is often the hardest part! When you disturb your soils with raking and tilling you will bring up hidden seeds in the landscape. The soils contain a native seed bank, and when you disturb those soils, you can bring these seeds to the surface. All the prep work can allow for conditions to germinate. Allow them some time to germinate and grow and then treat them with a systemic herbicide. Treat them once or twice and then you can move onto hydroseeding!

Hydroseeding

Grass seed, fertilizer, hydro-mulch and a special bonding agent are mixed into a thick slurry which is evenly sprayed onto your prepared soil. Once your lawn is hydro-seeded, the grass seed and fertilizer are protected by an attractive green layer of hydro mulch that seals in moisture and helps thwart rain from eroding the soil and washing away seeds, even on steep banks. Germination is quick because the seed is soaked in the watery mix. Seed varieties can be adjusted to suit your growing locations and needs. Special additives can be tank mixed and applied with the hydro-seed as well.