

Caring for Your St. Augustinegrass

January through December

The following information has been adapted directly from NC State's internet publication TurfFiles. The information has been filtered to provide the information you need to complement the services we provide for you. If you wish to view this reference, go to <http://www.turffiles.ncsu.edu/pubs/management/ag431.html> . You can also reference TurfFiles at www.turffiles.ncsu.edu .

Mowing

Mow your St. Augustine lawn to 2.25" before it reaches 4.0" . Recycle your clippings since twenty-five per cent of your nutrients are in the clippings. Even if you get behind with your mowing collect the clippings for mulch. But don't send them to the landfill.

Watering

Your St. Augustinegrass requires one inch of rainfall per week and prefers all of the week's watering at once. However, clay soils do not absorb water as quickly as sandy soils. Do not allow runoff when using a sprinkler. Use a rain gauge to determine rainfall amounts. You can also use a pan or pie tin to collect irrigation water. Then calculate the amount your sprinkler delivers to achieve the weekly rainfall you would need to augment the week's rainfall. A good watering program will help keep your lawn healthy and mitigate pest, disease, and weed problems. When weather conditions are unusually warm, dry, and windy during dormancy, your lawn may require watering. Safe-T-Chem will send you a turf alert if you are signed up for email alerts.

Thatch

Thatch is the layer of dead (undecayed) grass at the surface of your lawn. Thatch is beneficial in the winter to protect your turf from cold. Thatch in the summer and spring prevent water and nutrients from reaching your lawn. If the thatch layer is more than 0.75", it should be removed.

Burning

Do not burn your dormant St. Augustine lawn. Fire can spread quickly and harm you or cause property damage. Do not light fireworks on a dormant St. Augustinegrass lawn.

Pests

White grub worm control is best performed during two periods: 1) March/April prior to hatching into beetles and 2) August after eggs have been laid and grubs are closest to the soil surface. The presence of moles is an indicator that you may have grubs since they are an excellent food source.

Check for Red Imported Fire Ant mounds. It is important to treat these pests as soon as you discover them to prevent liability risks and to slow their spread to other areas. Fire ants damage plants and have been known to chew through power and communication lines.

Chinch bug infestation is indicated by yellow spots and usually occurs when the turf is dry. Ask us about the coffee can test.