

## **BILL'S ONE LINE LAWN & GARDEN TIPS**

Following are some tips to keep your lawn & garden looking great. I know that many of these have been mentioned in previous newsletters but they do deserve repeating. They are based on what many of our customers do to have beautiful landscapes.

### **LAWNS**

- Rake up the grey/pink snow mold in the spring as well as other debris acquired over the winter and dispose of it. Don't compost this material as it may house over-wintering fungus, bacteria & insects.  
Rake your grass vigorously in the spring to remove any thatch buildup. Thatch is a tight mass of organic matter that hasn't broken down and is a breeding ground for diseases, weed seeds and insects.
- Top dress with top soil – not triple mix, any bare or thin patches and plant grass seed – broadcast the seed on the soil & lightly pack it into the soil.
- **DON'T CUT GRASS SHORT!!** This is the biggest mistake most people make. Keeping grass cut long will help prevent bent grass and weeds from gaining a foothold in your lawn. 3 inches is the recommended height of mowing. Higher mowing also encourages deeper root growth making it stronger and more resistant to drought and disease. Taller grass shades the soil so it won't dry out as fast thus requiring less water.
- Keep your lawn mower blade sharp. Mow in different directions each time. Cut only 1/3 of the grass height at one time.
- With good watering you won't need insecticides & herbicides.
- Fertilize the grass well. With a well-fertilized lawn you won't need to use as much water. Use a high quality, slow-release, granular fertilizer, every 6 weeks. Fertilizers that have chelated iron added, will give the lawn a deep rich green colour. Do not gather up lawn clippings. Leave them on the lawn as a source of fertilizer.
- Don't water every day, water every 2-4 days depending on heat & dryness. Soil should dry out between watering. Watering the grass well will eliminate most grub & cinch bug damage.
- Aeration is recommended in clay soils to allow water & air to enter the soil. Earthworms play an important function in aeration.
- Handpick weeds when you see them. Make sure the weed is pulled out with the root intact. If you use chemical weed spray, spot-treat – apply only on the target. **WEED AND FEED** type products are not recommended as they are non-selective and can kill flowers next to the lawn.
- In the fall – October or November, apply a slow release fertilizer high in phosphorous and potash (the second and third numbers in the analysis, the first is nitrogen).

### **GARDENS**

- Add triple - mix soil to your gardens will enhance nutrients, composition & texture.
- Adding peat moss improves the soil moisture handling and nutrient holding capacity.
- Adding manure & peat moss instead of triple - mix is another option.
- Adding mulch to the garden surface will keep weeds in check & conserve moisture.
- Adding commercial fertilizer will give flowers that added growth.
- Watering is important, but don't over water, it could kill shrubs in heavy soil conditions.