Lawn care can also waste dollars

Lawns are the carpets for our outdoor living rooms. Just as none of us would want a threadbare, soiled carpet inside, we do not want a baid, scorched lawn outside.

Canadians spend a good deal of time and effort tending their lawns. But what most do not realize is about half the attention and dollars we lavish on our lawns are not only wasted, they are damag-

There are three essential tasks in maintaining a well manicured lawn-Keeping the soil fertile, mowing the grass carefully and watering it judiciously.

Organic or inorganic fertilizer should be applied to a lawn during the spring and fall growing seasons. This will result in a thick carpet of grass that can effectively choke out weeds.

Fertilizers contain three elements to provide nutrition. Nitrogen encourages slow steady grass growth. Phosophorous is essential to healthy root development and potash makes grass more durable, less susceptible to disease.

To find the best mix of fertilizer elements for your lawn consult a local landscape gardener agriculturalist.

Frequent, light applications of fertilizer keep top and root grass growth in balance. This makes for healthier grass, more apt to withstand harsh conditions or disease.

It is important to note fertilizer's benefits are crased if it is not applied properly. A mechanical spreader is the best tool for ensuring even application. If part of the lawn is missed when fertilizer is put on it will contrast with the rest of the grass by its lighter color. On the other hand, an area that is overfertilized will burn and later be susceptible to winter kill.

Pushing a mower around your lawn seems like a fairly simple task. But unless it is undertaken with proper care, you can wind up damaging your lawn rather than grooming it.

Grass should never be cut to a height less than one and a half inches. Nor should more than one inch of blade be taken off at a cutting. If grass is cut too short, the root crowns are damaged and they cannot produce the required food to nourish the plant.

New growth is discouraged if grass is left too long. A lawn becomes sparse. Under these conditions weeds take root and moisture evaporates rapidly. The lawn looks generally unsightly.

The frequency with which a lawn is cut should be geared to its growth rate, rather than leaving a particular time period between mowings.

Trimming a lawn with a dull blade in your mower is rather like a surgeon operating with a dull instrument. Neither tool performs well. Unless the mower blade is sharp, grass is torn and bruised.

A light covering of grass clippings left on the lawn helps nourish it.

Grass watering should be (Continued on page 6)



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