** Putting Your Lawn To Bed For Winter**

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Now that the calendar says November, it is time to prepare your lawn for the cold and snow of winter and a healthy awakening in spring.

**Mowing:** Lawns left too tall over the winter encourage disease problems like snow mold and tunneling of meadow mice. Mow one final time at 1¾-2 inches.

**Aerating :** Provides several valuable benefits to fall lawns including:

* Strengthening the root system and allowing the roots to shoot deeper. This helps the lawn prepare for the colder winter temperatures.
* It allows water and fertilizer to penetrate deeper into the soil where it does the most good.
* The plugs left behind after aeration will decompose and further fertilize the lawn.

**Fertilization:** Fall fertilization is very important to the health of your lawn.

* It strengthens the plant’s roots for better survival of the cold, snow and ice of winter.
* Fall fertilization also promotes earlier spring greenup of lawns.
* Apply a slow release fertilizer high in Potassium to feed the roots before complete dormancy.

**Remove Leaves and Debris:** A thick layer of leaves left on the lawn over winter can create poor air circulation which can cause disease and winter kill.

**Dormant Seeding:** This process involves putting down seed while the ground is not frozen, yet cold enough so germination of the grass seed will not occur.

* This allows the seed to germinate once the soil reaches the necessary germination temperature
* Best results occur when slit seed ¼” deep in the soil.
* With the seed already planted, there is no waiting in spring for the site to be prepared for sowing the seed.
* Because lawn seeds germinate at a slightly lower soil temperature than many weeds, the turf seed will get a “jump” on the weeds.
* The lawn seed you dormant seeded will not germinate until spring, wait 2-3 mowings before applying weed killers of any kind.

Preparing a lawn for winter gives it the best chance of not only surviving the dry, cold, months, but also thriving with more new growth in the spring and summer.