

# Lawns –Preparing for winter



As nights become cooler and the amount of rainfall increases, grass roots grow and absorb nutrients to prepare the lawn for winter. Carry out the following activities to encourage root growth and increase your lawn's storage capacity.

## **Aerate your lawn**

Use an aerator to remove small plugs of soil to form small holes in the lawn. This allows the soil to take in increased air and water to promote root growth. High traffic lawn areas should be aerated to relieve compaction. Not aerating means compacted areas suffer during dry periods as rainfall usually runs off and water cannot move freely in the soil zone.

## **Fertilize**

Broadcast a fertilizer highest in phosphorous and low in nitrogen to increase root growth.

## **Spread Compost**

Top dress lawn with a peat, sand, and seed mixture to encourage microorganisms to consume thatch in the lawn. This promotes healthier growth and increases tolerance to water and cold stress. Substitute compost if you have enough. Spread your mixture evenly over the lawn being sure to leave the mixture of grass blades. Sift mixture to lower levels using a bristle broom.

## **Lime your lawn**

Fall is an ideal time to lime your lawn, as the lime can work into the soil over winter and begin having an effect on the soil pH more quickly than in the spring. A general rate is 100 lbs per 1000 ft<sup>2</sup>. Application can be halved for fall and spring. Having your soil tested will help determine the amount of lime you will require. Use the Rapitest Soil Tester Kit at Murray's, or take a soil sample to the Agricultural Research station.

