Aeration

Lawn aeration is standard lawn care. Aerating a lawn means supplying the soil with air. It reduces soil compaction and helps control thatch while helping water and fertilizer move into the root zone. As lawns age or sustain heavy use soil compaction can result. Soil compaction greatly reduces the pore space within the soil that would normally hold air. It has a negative impact on nutrient uptake and water infiltration. This results in poor growth and lawn deterioration.

Benefits of Lawn Aeration:

- Allows oxygen to reach the roots and soil.
- Allows organic fertilizers and nutrients to reach the roots.
- Greater water absorption in the soil.
- Breaks up thatch. (Thatch is the layer of dead grass between the healthy vegetation and the surface of the soil.)
- Loosens compacted soil to allow roots more room to grow.
- Creates a healthier lawn.

When should I aerate?

Aeration is best done in the cool months before or after the summer season. Cool season grasses such as tall fescue or Kentucky bluegrass are best done in late August or September. Warm season grasses like bermudagrass and zoysiagrass are best aerated in May or June. Aerating is usually done once a year, although during times of drought a second aeration may be necessary.

How do I aerate?

- The soil should be moist, not wet. (Water your lawn the evening before if necessary.)
- Inspect the area to be aerated, removing any debris including rocks and other objects that may present a hazard.
- Identify and mark all ground objects that need to be avoided, such as sprinkler heads, stakes, etc.
- Start engine and adjust throttle accordingly.
- With the aerator on the lawn, push down the rear handle to lower the tines.
- Engage clutch control.
- Maneuvering while aerating can be accomplished by guiding the machine where you want to go.
- To stop tines, release clutch handle.

- Aerate the lawn in two directions to ensure good coverage.
- Do not use on slopes exceeding 25% grade.
- Never cross hard objects or surfaces including sidewalks, driveways, etc. with tines down.

Other Tips to Remember

- Use a core or plug aerator as opposed to a spike aerator. Spike aerators do not take any soil with them, often contributing to the soil compaction problem they are trying to solve. The removal of soil with core aerators allows the lawn's roots more room to expand.
- Leave the extracted cores on the grass to dry then rake them into the grass - this creates micro-organisms that feed on thatch. You may also mow over them with your lawn mower, which will break them up just as well.