Healthy Home and Garden Tips
Fall Lawn Care

Summer was brutal on my lawn this year. Clearly not everything suffered from the extra use because tiny golden orbs fill every bare patch in my yard. Secretly I wonder how many dandelion puffs it would take to wish away the weeds that have crept in over the past few months. Although lawn care wasn't top on my list of priorities this fall, I am relieved to know the damaged areas can be improved without the expensive, muddy mess involved with reseeding. Instead of starting from scratch, I can simply add grass seed to my lawn through a renovation process called overseeding. Fall (with spring a close second) is one of the best times of the year to consider overseeding. The cooler days, warm soil temperatures and increased precipitation combine to create the perfect conditions for seed germination and growth. Done right, I will have a beautiful lush lawn next spring without having to use unhealthy garden chemicals to control weeds and moss.

Overseeding Tips

Follow these simple steps for a beautiful lawn this spring.

- Use a rake to remove moss and hand tools to remove weeds
- Sprinkle ½ inch or less of compost over lawn and rake in
- Add a local seed mix using 25% of the recommended rate on label
- Cover with thin layer of compost
- Water frequently and stay off lawn until new grass is established

Lawn Care Basics

1. Leave grass clippings on the lawn after mowing, instead of weed and feed and mow frequently during the spring and fall growing season
2. Maintain a sharp mower blade and mow high to encourage deep root growth
3. Water deep and infrequently – one inch per week during the peak growing season
4. Use Perennial rye grass seeds for sunny spots and Fescue for shady areas
5. Want an alternative to grass, use an eco-lawn mix of Dwarf perennial ryegrass, yarrow, clover, English daisy and alyssum

Safely clean and sanitize your home

Indoor air quality is important for keeping our families and pets healthy. However, some cleaners and disinfectants harm our air indoors more than others. Fortunately, killing germs without lowering air quality is possible by following a few simple tips.

Start with soap – Soap is a very effective cleaning agent that can destroy viruses and bacteria. Look for vegetable-oil based soaps, and use this as your first line of defense.

Boost your cleaning with baking soda or vinegar – Cleaning with baking soda and vinegar reduces the number of germs on surfaces, and will save you money. Look for simple recipes on Metro's website – **Oregonmetro.gov/greencleaners**

Ventilate and wear protection when using disinfectants – Disinfectants should be used with windows open and fans on. Keep children and pets away while applying disinfectants. For less toxic options, look for hydrogen peroxide or alcohol-based disinfectants.

Use recommended contact times for disinfectants – Look on the back of the bottle for instructions on how long a product should be in contact with the surface to properly disinfect

Don't throw unused chemicals or empty containers in the trash – Some containers can be recycled, but others should be treated as hazardous waste. Call **503-234-3000** to find out how to dispose of chemicals and their containers.

Homemade Multi-Purpose Disinfectant Spray

Ingredients:
- 70% isopropyl rubbing alcohol
- White distilled vinegar
- Tree tea (or lavender) essential oil
- 16 ounce spray bottle

Directions:
- Combine 1½ cups isopropyl alcohol and 50-60 drops essential oil in a spray bottle and shake.
- Add ½ cup vinegar and shake again.

Notes:
- The essential oil is added as an antibacterial ingredient.
- Recipe is not safe to use on special stone surfaces like granite or marble due to vinegar.

For more information on safe cleaning and disinfecting, attend our free webinar on "Safe cleaning and disinfection for education centers and schools" on October 28th from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Register at: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_0XFvTNF6TwuBM7ZTz3ai9Q

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