



If you fertilize,

have your soil tested for nutrient availability before applying fertilizers.

- Pick up soil sampling kits from local libraries, the Virginia Cooperative Extension office at 2449 Princess Anne Road, Building #14, Virginia Beach or the Lynnhaven River NOW office. Mail the completed information form with the sample box and fee (\$10, for basic testing) to the address on the form. Your test results will be mailed to you.
- Follow your soil test recommendations for soil amendments. Fertilizers are described by three numbers, such as 12-4-8 or 46-0-0. These three numbers indicate, respectively, the percent by weight of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K) in the fertilizer. The test also indicates the acidity (pH) of your soil and whether lime is needed.
- Calibrate your spreader annually and sweep any fertilizer off paved areas before it is washed away by rain or irrigation. Measure your turf area to ensure you are using the proper amounts of fertilizer. See the Virginia Cooperative Extension website, listed below, for details on spreader calibration.
- Fertilize with 1 to 1.5 lbs N/1000 ft²/year. Use slow release forms of nitrogen. For tall fescue, apply a maximum of one pound of N/1000 ft² in the fall and 1/2 lb or less in late spring. For bermudagrass, St. Augustinegrass and zoysiagrass, apply 1 to 1½ lbs N/1000 ft²/year from April - September.
- Do not apply phosphorus (P) unless your soil results indicate that it is needed. Local soils often contain sufficient phosphorus and it is a major waterway pollutant.
- Apply potassium (K) at 1.5 to 3 lbs/1000 ft²/year, if indicated on soil test.

Manage weeds, insects and diseases; don't allow pests to create bare soil which leads to erosion and sedimentation of our waterways. Be careful to identify pests and consider alternative control measures before applying any pesticides.

Maintain sharp mower blades and never remove more than 25% of turf with any one mowing. Recycle grass clippings by leaving mulched cuttings on your lawn.

A properly managed lawn should not require reseeding each year.

Resources:

VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/envirohort/426-723/426-723.html
or contact the Virginia Beach Master Gardener Help Desk at 757-385-8156
for information on soil tests, spreader calibration and turfgrass

LYNNHAVEN RIVER NOW

www.LRNow.org / 757-962-5398
for information on Rain Gardens, Buffer Gardens,
Water-Friendly Gardening, Lawn Care and Rain Barrels