



# WaterWiseTIPS.org

"Water isn't all you save."

## LAWN CARE

### Aeration and Thatch Management

With judicious use of water and fertilizer thatch build-up can be kept in check with core aeration alone. Core aeration also has the added value of increasing percolation, freeing up gas ex-change, and will increase the water holding capacity of soils.

#### AERATION AND THATCH TIP

Aerate when soils have adequate moisture; the tines will penetrate the soil and do a better job of removing thatch.



### Top Dressing

Central Oregon soils are very coarse and have a difficult time storing water and nutrients long enough for lawn roots to absorb. Improve soils by adopting a regular top dressing program. The best time to do this is in combination with aeration. Light applications of a fine compost, no more than 1/4 inch in depth is applied at one time, is preferred over heavy layers. Use a compost or mulch spreader to ensure even application. A quick pass with a leaf rake will help work the material into the lawn.

#### TOP DRESSING TIP

Over-seeding in combination with aeration and top dressing is an excellent way to fill bare spots and establish grasses well adapted for your lawn.



### A Street Strip Conversion

Maintaining a lawn in the narrow confines of a street strip can be frustrating. Narrow dimensions, irregular shape, and other obstacles all make watering a lawn in these areas next to impossible without producing overspray and runoff. At some point, instead of fighting these conditions it may make sense to convert a street strip to something more productive and less wasteful. Good news, there is help! The City of Bend StreetScape Guide was created to help Bend water and utility customers tackle a landscape conversion for street strip areas. From native plants to a colorful blend of pollinator friendly plantings, this guide will help you sort through the design process necessary to make the transformation to an ecologically friendly StreetScape.



For more information please visit

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**Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities.** To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, or electronic, please contact 541-317-3000 ext. 2 or email [utilities@bendoregon.gov](mailto:utilities@bendoregon.gov).

### Lawn Maintenance Chart of Central Oregon

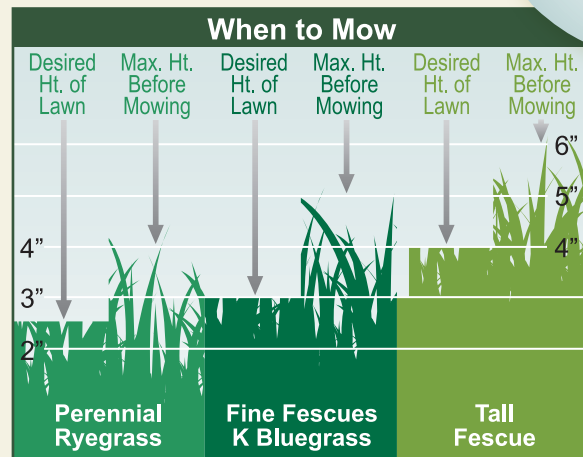
Activity	Note	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
Mowing	Increase frequency during heavy growth		█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Fertilization	2-4 lbs N for home lawns 4-6 lbs N for sports turf		█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Core Aeration	Once per year for home lawns		█					█	
Top-dress	No more than 1/4" per application		█					█	
Over-seeding	Best when air temperatures 60°- 80° F		█					█	



Lawns provide a variety of benefits to the urban ecosystem we call Bend. They offer a space to recreate and gather, help reduce rising temperatures associated with heat island effect, and provide erosion, sediment and dust control for local landscapes. Unfortunately, they can use a lot of water. In fact, one square foot of lawn requires approximately 20 gallons of water per growing season in Central Oregon. Use less water by following these simple, practical approaches to lawn care based on best management practices.

## Mowing

Regular mowing stimulates growth and increases the density of a lawn, a sure way to combat the intrusion of weeds. Choose a mowing height that is appropriate for the species of grasses present in the lawn. This is often 2.5 to 3.0 inches high. As a general rule, never remove more than one third of the lawn height in any single cutting. Changing mowing directions and patterns will improve mowing quality and help avoid wheel rutting. When possible, leave the lawn clippings on the lawn as they can provide 1-2 lbs. of the annual nitrogen (N) requirement a lawn needs to stay healthy.



Weekly Water Amounts	
APR	0.75" / week
MAY	1.00" / week
JUN	1.25" / week
JUL	1.50" / week
AUG	1.25" / week
SEP	1.00" / week



## IRRIGATION TIP

Inspect, repair, and tune-up irrigation systems in early spring, before it's hot; this will help avoid turf stress spots that routinely show up in mid-summer.

beneath the landscape. Instead of increasing irrigation runtimes for an entire station or even landscape, consider hand watering these spots to get through the hottest, driest part of the growing season.

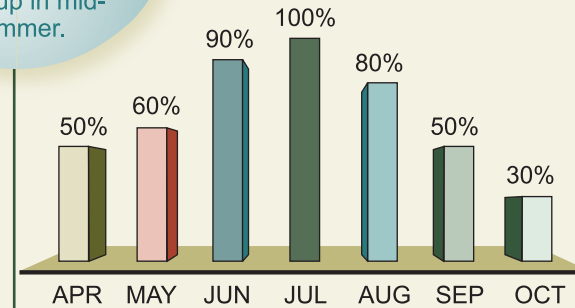
## Irrigation

Lawns in central Oregon require approx. 1.5 inches of supplemental irrigation per week during peak growing season (July - August). However, the rate at which sprinkler systems deliver water can vary greatly. Make an effort to know how much water the irrigation system delivers in a set amount of time. If possible, use the free irrigation rain gauges from City of Bend WaterWise Program to determine the actual delivery rate for each irrigation zone.

## MOWING TIP

Frequent mowing will remove debris, provide an excellent cut, and increase turf density; a good way to combat the intrusion of weeds.

## Seasonal Adjust %



Most irrigation controllers have a Seasonal Adjust % feature that allows the user to easily increase / decrease runtime minutes for all zones. Adjusting the percentage will add or remove runtime minutes to ALL irrigation zones. Use the bar chart as a guide to make changes to your irrigation schedule each month.

It is absolutely necessary to adjust irrigation run times throughout the growing season. This will ensure the irrigation system is supplying enough water to keep the lawn healthy during the hottest parts of the year. Use the irrigation controllers Seasonal Adjust % setting to increase irrigation runtimes during the first half of the growing season (April - July). Use it to decrease irrigation runtimes during the second half of the growing season (July - October). Matching irrigation system schedules with actual water needs is critical to using water wisely in the lawn.

Keep in mind that it is almost impossible to maintain a lawn during peak growing season without minor signs of stress. These are often due to irregularities in the distribution of water by the irrigation system or varying soil conditions

## Fertilization

Lawns don't have to be neon green to be healthy. In fact, over fertilization can create unwanted growth spurts, require additional irrigation, and is a factor in contributing to thatch build up. Organic and other slow release formulations of N will provide an even nutrient release which will help limit fluctuations in growth. Most lawns in Central Oregon will perform well with 3-4 lbs. of N per 1000 square feet. Athletic fields and other high traffic lawn areas may require in excess of 4 lbs. actual N per 1000 square feet. For an even application, apply half of the recommended amount of fertilizer in one direction and the other half in a second direction.

## FERTILIZATION TIP

Slow release formulations of fertilizer provide a slow and even nutrient release, requiring fewer applications than quick release formulations.

## Protecting Water Resources



- Clippings, leaves, and other yard debris left on hard surfaces can end up in storm drains causing a wide variety of issues.
- Use caution when handling fertilizers and pesticides. A drop spreader or a rotary spreader with a directional shield will reduce application of these materials to unwanted areas.
- Irrigation overspray and run-off can intensify surface and groundwater pollution by directly transporting pollutants to storm drains.

## Weed Control

Maintaining a healthy, dense lawn will go a long way in preventing unwanted weeds. However, weeds will appear at some point. When they do appear, removal by manual or mechanical means is generally the preferred method for residential lawns. A simple monthly inspection for weeds is an excellent approach that usually keeps them in check.

Chemical applications of selective herbicides, while more common for large lawn areas or those with serious weed issues, should be applied by an Oregon Department of Agriculture licensed pesticide applicator.