

Preparing your lawn for spring

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PREPARING YOUR LAWN FOR **SPRING**

By Bob Dailey

A Message from The Woodlands Joint Powers Agency

In just a few weeks, spring will be returning to The Woodlands. No, not the vernal equinox – that occurs on the evening of March 20. In Southeast Texas, spring occurs after the last frost. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the last frost date will happen sometime between February 19 and March 13. The Old Farmer's Almanac, however, indicates that there is a 90 percent probability that the last frost date will be around February 28.

St. Augustine and Bermuda grass lawns are still dormant this time of year, but that doesn't mean you can't take some positive actions to have healthy lawns in the coming warm months.

Apply An Organic, Pre-Emergence Herbicide

Corn gluten has been proven to be an effective pre-emergence herbicide. It's organic, won't harm your lawn, and will do a good job on preventing weed seeds from germinating. It generally comes in a granule form. Spread it on your lawn and water it in with a hose.

Get Your Soil Tested

Your soil may be depleted of the minerals necessary for turf grass to thrive. Get a soil test done. Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Soil, Water and Forage Testing Laboratory in College Station will conduct a soil test for around \$20. Contact your local Extension office (936-539-7824) for more information. There are also private soil testing laboratories in the area.

Please remember that at this time, grass is still dormant. Your grass will begin to come out of full hibernation after the last frost date. Until it begins to green up, there is no need to water. After, begin watering only if needed, using no more than one inch per week.

Do Not Fertilize Yet

It's far too early to fertilize your lawn. Fertilization now will only help weeds take hold. The same goes for compost. Wait until mid-spring to do these chores.

For more tips on lawns and water conservation, please visit www.wjpa.org

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