Soil deficiencies occur most frequently in sandy soils, acidic soils (pH less than 5.0) or sodium-saturated soils (sodium). True Ca deficiencies are very uncommon in turfgrasses.

**Magnesium—** Turfgrasses growing on soils testing below 20 ppm Mehlich I extractable magnesium (Mg) usually respond to Mg applications. A Mg deficiency prior to spring growth can be corrected by applying dolomitic lime (if required for soil pH adjustment), magnesium sulfate, or potassium-magnesium sulfate.

Application of 4 lbs. Mg/1000 sq. ft. should correct the deficiency for an entire growing season. Annual monitoring is recommended if a deficiency has been noted.

If the soil Mg status is marginal, high rates of K fertilization can induce Mg deficiencies. There is no “magic” Ca:Mg ratio required in soils for optimum turfgrass growth; rather, the absolute soil test Mg level is of paramount importance.

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**Pruning tips for aesthetics, tree health, from Dr. Wade**

- “The key to pruning is knowing the difference between heading and thinning,” says Dr. Gary Wade of the University of Georgia. “Thick, dense canopies increase disease and insects, and the plant uses more water.”

Wade, in a presentation at the Georgia Turfgrass Conference, told the audience to try and maintain nature's natural plant shape when pruning. You should try to cut right outside the branch collar, and not leave stubs. “When pruning is done properly, there is no need to paint or dress wounds,” he noted.

Pruning should be done with a purpose, he said, and should be done “with low maintenance in mind.” Why prune at all? For various good reasons, including:

- To maintain the correct size of the plants. This is a common problem with residential landscapes.
- To improve flowering or fruiting performance.
- To repair what Mother Nature has inflicted upon us.
- To rejuvenate plants in the dormant season.

Some Wade tips:

- Prune six weeks before the start of the new growing season.
- Do not severely prune boxwood or conifers (pine, spruce, junipers).
- Prune in stages over two to three years, if possible.
- Be careful pruning crepe myrtle, the most abused plant in our landscapes.