


Late Fall Fertilization . . .

(continued from page 14)


recommendations. If your soil test report indicates a need for phosphorus, late fall is a good time to fertilize. However, there is no need to apply additional phosphorus if it is present at sufficient levels.

Turfgrasses require potassium in relatively large amounts, so annual applications are usually required. This element enhances rooting, cold-hardiness, disease-resistance and wear-tolerance. For these reasons, late summer and late fall are ideal times to fertilize with potassium.

Summary

Late fall fertilization should take place when shoot growth ceases, the grass is still green, and before the soil freezes. Benefits of fertilizing in late fall include better winter color, enhanced spring greenup, and increased rooting. Typically, low to moderate amounts of soluble nitrogen provide good turf color without excessive shoot growth in early spring. However, slow-release nitrogen sources can also provide a good color response in early spring when used at higher rates. To avoid potential leaching and runoff problems, use slow-release nitrogen sources on sandy soils. Do not apply fertilizer to frozen soils. 

Credit: The Keynoter, Fall 1995.



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