

IMPROVING TURF QUALITY USING LESS WATER

Soil wetting agents are one of the most effective tools a turf or landscape manager can use to alleviate water infiltration and drainage problems.

By easing the surface tension of water molecules, wetting agents like AquaGro allow water to penetrate into heavy thatch, hydrophobic (water repellent), layered or compacted soils. University research has proven that treatments with wetting agents can eliminate localized dry spots, resulting in a dramatic improvement in turf growth and visual quality.

AquaGro wetting agent, when applied to the soil surrounding plant material, can reduce evaporation and run-off by promoting quicker water penetration. In highly compacted areas, for instance, surface-applied water cannot easily reach a plant's root system. The USDA reports that, in some states, less than 20 percent of rainfall actually gets into plant root-zones. Field tests, however, have shown that AquaGro can help solve such problems because 30 to 50 percent less water will be used since the water is not lost to evaporation or run-off.

Joseph Broyles of Lawn Doctor of Oyster Bay-Syosset, N.Y. finds that AquaGro makes the grass "obviously healthier" and it's also a money-maker.

"It separates me from other people in a lot of instances," he notes. "It's really improved the drainage and root systems for a lot of my clients."

"There are some lawns I have where customers are side-by-side and one person will pay for it and one won't. You can tell the difference. I say that's because I use the AquaGro, because everything else I do on the properties is similar."

Broyles says AquaGro treatments are an excellent add-on service. He charges \$8 to \$10 per 1000 square feet, making two applications per lawn per year.

Meanwhile, Chris Sann owns a customized lawn service that recommends AquaGro to 90 percent of its clients. It helps solve three main prob-



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lems: hilly areas that drain quickly, soil layering and thatch.

"The bulk of my use is with granular, AquaGro • S," notes the owner of Complete Lawn Service, Wilmington, Del. "I'm small enough that I can isolate and solve problems with a custom application."

"After I test soil, if there is a physical layering problem, I use AquaGro. The wetting agent helps reduce the soil interface problem. I've also noticed that, if you use it in a coordinated program...where thatch is involved...AquaGro will increase root depth by 100 percent easily."

Paul Luccia of Heyser Landscaping, Norristown, Pa. agrees.

"The turf grows thicker with AquaGro," he says. "In a sense, it gets me contracts that I might not get. I can be precise in solving a particular client's problem."

One client, Luccia explains, had 150 flowers to be watered two to three times per week to keep them healthy. But a potting mix incorporating AquaGro solved time and labor problems. "The wetting agent helped take care of almost all the water needs of the flowers. We just watered maybe once a month, and when we did water, it was very fast."

On slopes, berms and exposed areas and on compacted or thatchy soils, water tends to easily run off the soil surface. In these instances, wetting agents—along with a well-managed irrigation program—are the keys to improving water infiltration. AquaGro does not change the soil structure or eliminate thatch; it does measureably improve water penetration and aeration, which in turn provides a healthy environment for root growth.

In the case of golf greens where inconsistent topdressing practices have led to layered soils, drainage problems often result. This can mean decreased turf vigor and increased disease. In this scenario, a wetting agent can help solve the problem without completely renovating the greens.

"I use AquaGro to 'open up' the soil so water will penetrate and cure the localized dry spots," notes Bill Foust, superintendent at Pine Lake Golf Club in Anderson, S.C. "The big triplex mowers running over the greens cause a lot of compaction. So unless you've got real good drainage, it's not a bad idea to apply AquaGro on a regular basis. It's done a real good job for me."

INJECTING AQUAGRO WITH IRRIGATION SAVES LABOR



P.P.M Unit

Wetting agents can be more conveniently applied when injected directly into irrigation systems. Aquatrols manufactures The Little Squirt System and the P.P.M. Unit to inject AquaGro • L or AquaGro Injectable directly into the irrigation stream.

The Little Squirt is a very precise injector which is regulated by the flow rate of irrigation water. It automatically and consistently injects the desired concentration of AquaGro regardless of changes in flow rate. The