

Think Natural When Taking Care of Your Lawn

04/20/2002

Grass is one of the biggest consumers of dangerous, synthetic chemicals. Mind you, I'm not against having a beautiful green lawn, but a chemically treated lawn is not a healthy atmosphere for our children, pets and wildlife.

There are alternatives to synthetic lawn care that use organic techniques. These earth-friendly methods will give you the satisfaction of knowing that your lawn is a safe place for your pets and kids.

There are plenty of great organic fertilizers that naturally break down thatch, increase the natural microbiotic and macrobiotic activity, prevent disease, increase water retention, decrease fertilization needs and reduce general maintenance on the lawn. Going with organic fertilizer will also allow you to use a mulching lawn mower.

Aerating the soil with a core aerator is another technique I use at least once a year (usually in the spring) to increase the oxygen exchange in the soil. This process also reduces insect populations by reducing standing water. By core aerating, you will also increase root penetration and increased water retention, especially if you top-dress your lawn with 1/4 inch to 1/8 inch layer of compost. If you don't want to invest in a core aerator of your own, you can rent them at rental supply stores across the Valley.

Weeds are usually the symptom, not the problem. Weeds pop up when there is too much shade, lack of organic content in the soil, micro-organisms, uneven pH, inadequate moisture levels or other issues. When you need to treat weeds, there are numerous organic solutions, including a spray called Bioganic, which contain clove oil. So, avoid chemicals and go natural -- live healthy!