



Vol. 4. No. 1.

Welcome to our 4th year of Timely Turf Tips! Spring is seemingly all around us, making it hard to resist jumping into all manner of lawn and yard projects. **But remember -- it's still early in the season!** Because our lawns have not fully come out of dormancy, heavy raking, dethatching, and plug aerating can damage tender, young grass struggling to re-establish itself. We recommend **only light raking** right now, to remove any accumulated sticks, leaves or pet waste, and to pull rocks and gravel back onto roadways. Preventing these things from reaching storm drains and ditches that lead to local lakes, rivers and wetlands is crucial to preventing phosphorus build up.

As in past years, a number of customers have called with **snow mold** concerns. Rake the affected areas and then give them time for the grass to rebound. If this doesn't happen you can spot seed in these areas. For more information on snow mold, log on to www.extension.umn.edu: click on search, then type in snow mold. You may also have spots in your lawn where you want to apply gypsum to combat winter salt damage, such as areas where snow piles existed. If you are experiencing **vole damage**, rake out the area as best you can and within a couple weeks the grass should fill in. If not, you can spot seed **provided you haven't already applied crabgrass prevention**. The best *prevention* for this problem is to be *proactive* by mowing low going into winter and trimming areas where voles tend to hide. **Moles** are another troublesome pest. **Talk to us about a new product** we'll be carrying this year – previously available only to professionals.

To reiterate past Spring **Timely Turf Tips Newsletters**: applying crabgrass control now may cause its prevention components to be used up too early in the season and allow crabgrass to re-establish itself before freeze out. **We will again be sending out an email alert for timely application**. If you are considering the natural alternative of **Corn Gluten Meal**, we can assist you in establishing the successful three-year regimen this method normally requires. An added benefit of this method is that it also provides springtime nitrogen.

Timely Tip:

Apply Crabgrass Prevention before soil temps reach 55-60° for several days (generally May 1-15) and water in. Timely application is imperative to season-long crabgrass control.

Like crabgrass prevention, other lawn applications and/or problem-solving techniques require appropriate timing and attention to **a program developed specifically for your particular lawn**. Spring is an optimal time to review what happened with your yard last year. Let Hugo Feed Mill assist you in identifying problems and formulating solutions. A good first step is **to soil test your yard**. In roughly a week to ten days your soil sample can be analyzed, and **Steve Marier** can help you interpret your results and devise an improvement plan. You can reach Steve via email (hugofeed@comcast.net) or telephone (651-429-3361). Due to the volume of calls this time of year you may need to leave him a voice mail message with numbers where you can be reached at various times of the day. We want to thank you in advance for your patience, and apologize for any inconvenience this causes — Steve will be doing his best to return calls and emails in a timely manner.

We would also greatly appreciate your input to help make our **4th consecutive year of Timely Turf Tips Newsletters** the most successful yet! Essential topics at specific times of the year tend to be similar, therefore we need to know which issues are affecting you and/or what topics you'd like to know more about. Please call (651-429-3361) or email (hugofeed@comcast.net) your suggestions at any time! We've listed a couple of informative web sites that get into greater detail regarding turf matters in our area:

- www.turf.umn.edu
- http://ipcm.wisc.edu/programs/school/section_2/default.htm

Stop in and see us at the **Hugo Feed Mill** for all your turf needs and lawn questions. While you're here, say "Hi" to some of the new faces you might have noticed around the place: **Terri** in the office, **Sara** and/or **Ryan** in the store, and **Dan** on the dock. We continually appreciate your business and the enduring patronage of our frequent customers.