

Timely Turf Tips

September 2011

As the days get shorter and the days and nights get cooler, this is a cue to people that summer is ending and fall is upon us. That is also a sign for insects, signaling them that they need to prepare for winter. For some insects this means finding sheltered places to overwinter which unfortunately can mean our homes. September is *the* best time to tinker with the lawn, bring in house plants, plant pansies, dig tender bulbs and start tasting local Minnesota Apples. Average first frost date for the Twin Cities is September 15!

Lawn

- One of the very best times of the year to be fertilizing your lawn is from about Labor Day through the middle of September.
- Early September is an excellent time to be doing some overseeding of damaged or thin areas of the lawn.
- Apply weed-killer and fertilizer for lawn care, but not to newly seeded areas.
- It is important to avoid serious water stress on lawns this time of year.
- One of the best times to be aerating the lawn is right around Labor Day.

Garden

- Take advantage of cool weather by planting trees, shrubs, and evergreens; use root-stimulating fertilizer to promote root growth.
- Plant perennials. Fall installation gives plants time to develop a strong root system. Most perennials flower in the spring; if planted then, they may not bloom the first year.
- Split and replant overgrown bulbs like daffodils. Dig up the bulb after the foliage has died and allow it to dry thoroughly. After drying, bulbs can be split and replanted.
- Plant spring-flowering bulbs and work bone meal into bottom of planting holes for better growth.
- Water young trees and shrubs.
- Plant chrysanthemums, pansies, asters, and flowering kale for fall color.
- Cut perennials to the ground after hard frost.
- Gather fallen leaves for mulch and compost use.
- Dig summer-blooming bulbs after the first killing frost and save for next planting season
- Prevent insects from over-wintering in your home by limiting entry points through caulking and removing mulch, leaves, and other possible debris close to the house. Once insects get inside, you do not have many options other than to physically remove them with a vacuum or broom and dust pan.

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