



# Timely Turf

## Tips



# April 2024

While spring seems to have arrived early this year, don't rush into working in the garden. Remember that springtime soil still needs to dry out before too much traffic goes on it or it's begun to be worked. If a diversion is needed, spend some time on the University of Minnesota Extension Yard and garden site, <https://extension.umn.edu/yard-and-garden>. Features include planting the vegetable garden, and managing insects on indoor plants. A How-to section has information on growing guides, flowers for pollinators, and watering wisely. News has new yard and garden resources, information on how the warm winter may affect insects and the growing season, and ideas on how to add diversity in tree selection. Check it out.

### Spring Yard and Garden Tips

Begin cleanup by picking up any sticks, litter, and pet waste that has accumulated over the winter on the lawn. Sweep any sand, rocks, and other debris off any hard surfaces to prevent it from reaching the storm sewer.

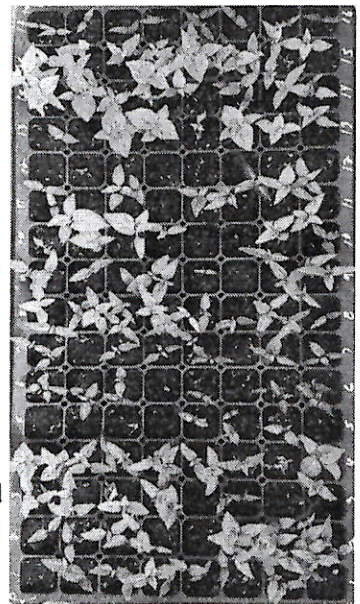
Do not rush to remove last year's plant residue. With fluctuating spring temperatures, that residue provides some frost protection and early spring gardens are too wet for any foot traffic anyway. Use the crumble test to see if the garden is ready for any work. This is done by taking a handful of dirt, shaping it into a ball, and poking the ball to see if it crumbles into smaller pieces. If it doesn't break apart, then wait to begin in order to prevent soil compaction.

You may not need to apply fertilizer in the spring. If the lawn is well-established, clippings were left on the turf, and a fall application was done, then spring fertilization may not be necessary. Consider a soil test for help in knowing the correct type and amount of product to use and when to apply it. To download a form, go to <https://soiltest.cfans.umn.edu/testing-services/lawn-garden> and click on the Lawn & Garden Soil Analysis Request Sheet (PDF) link. Please contact the mill if you have any questions about sampling your yard or garden.

If your yard had problems with crabgrass or other annual weeds, apply a pre-emergent herbicide when the soil temperature reaches 50 degrees. Be sure to watch your email for a notice from Steve when it is the right time to apply. Save now on your purchase with the coupon below.

Start to plant cold season crops (like lettuce, beets, carrots, peas, spinach, and radish) mid to late April depending on the weather.

Trim back any perennials that were left for winter interest or to provide food for birds before the new growth begins. Popular summer blooming shrubs, like Annabelle hydrangea and Anthony Waterer spirea, can be pruned back level with the ground because these plants bloom on new wood. The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum recommends this be done the first week in April.



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