

Eco-Turf Talk

ORGANIC TURF CARE NEWSLETTER



AUGUST 2023

ISSUE 4

WHAT WE DO

PJC Organic is the manufacturer of ProHealthy Turf Organic Products & distributor of soil amendments. We provide product and support to landscapers, schools & municipalities that want to transition from a conventional approach to an All-Natural Organic Turf Care program for the maintenance of their lawns & athletic fields.

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LATE-SUMMER TURF TIPS by Sean Breckin

As we transition out of July heat and into prime turf growing season, follow these late-summer organic turf tips. We want to make sure that you are checking all of your boxes for growing lush green grass – ORGANICALLY!

1. Irrigation Audit

If you are watering, test and check all of your irrigation heads. Ensure you are maximizing coverage on your lawns and fields, and take into account natural rainfall. Water is a precious resource. Accordingly, watering efficiently will help give your established turf and germinating seedlings the best chance to take root and push vigorous shoots.

[Check out our 1-2-3-2-1 Method.](#)

2. Repair and Level Trouble Areas

Before you get back into the routine maintenance schedule, take time to repair trouble spots. PJC Organic recommends a 60/40 loam compost mixed with seed for repairs. Whether it's a goal mouth or an area holding water in a client's backyard, premix seed with your top dress blend and give a little TLC to those trouble spots. Consistency is key with trouble areas, which is why it's recommended each season. Be sure to stick with it and the results will speak volumes to your customers. Use a 2"x4" board or a leveling rake to blend with surrounding areas.

3. Soil Test

Every 3 years perform a soil test. For accurate results, be sure to test at least 6 weeks after your last fertilizer application and before any late summer product apps. [Run your tests through us](#) to make your product recommendations easy and keep your focus on turf.

4. Sharpen Mower Blades and Clean Mower Decks

After 25 hours of use, be sure to sharpen your mower blades! This prevents damage to grass blades. If you notice your grass has white tips, it's an indication that your dull mower blades may be tearing the grass. In addition, remember to keep grass height at 3" minimum to crowd out weeds and return clippings. Clean equipment reduces the spread of disease. Keep in mind that this rainy and humid summer has been especially difficult for fungal pressure. Therefore, keep your mower decks clean between sites and do a daily detail at the end of the day.

5. Core Aerate

You can start aerating as soon as August 1st on irrigated lawns, or as early as August 15th on non-irrigated ones. Core aeration is one of the best methods of alleviating soil compaction there is! In addition, be sure to use hollow tines, because solid tines only perpetuate compaction problems. (cont. on page 2...)



LATE-SUMMER TURF TIPS cont.

6. Overseed

Take advantage of those aeration holes and broadcast grass seed. Late-summer over seeding provides the best window for seedling germination and establishment—giving you a more diverse and resilient turf stand year after year. Grass seed is your primary method of weed control! View our [Grass Seed For Fall Blog](#) for seed blend info & recommendations.

7. CHARGE the Soil!

Apply [PJC ProHealthy Turf CHARGE-S3](#) to prime your soil and turf for fall. Applying directly after aerating puts precious nutrients directly into the root zone. Thus priming the microbes for a long-term feed coming out of summer.

8. Feed the biology and, in turn, the turf!

Apply [PJC ProHealthy Turf Organic Fertilizers](#) within a few weeks of Charge S3 for best results (or simultaneously if you need to be efficient). This will provide balanced nutrition for soil microorganisms and your soon-to-be flourishing turf. We provide a wide range of fertilizers to make sure you achieve your annual fertility needs.

9. Apply Calcium

An oft forgotten but essential macro nutrient. Calcium is integral to healthy turf plants and nutrient dense soils. Whether you are looking to increase low pH, alleviate compaction chemically, chelate essential metal ions for plant uptake, or increase cation exchange capacity—we have the product set for you! Use [High Efficiency Lime](#), [Gypsum](#) or [Boost+S3](#) respectively to achieve different calcium needs for your soil. Be sure to apply these before the ground freezes. October 15th is usually a safe closing window, so this can be done with either late summer or fall applications!

10. Scout and Treat Grubs

Start scouting mid August – mid September. Page 4 of this newsletter dives into this Pest Spotlight—take a look!

Don't skip a beat these next few weeks and set yourself up for your best growing season yet. Follow these late-summer organic turf tips and transition out of summer well to set up for a successful fall.



INDUSTRY NEWS

GREEN GROUNDS CERTIFICATION FOR SCHOOL CAMPUSES

Re:wild Your Campus has developed a Green Grounds Certification to recognize schools pioneering the transition to organic land care. This certification encourages other educational institutions to join this land care revolution. The Green Grounds Certification has been developed with input from industry experts, groundskeepers, students, and sustainability professionals. “It goes above and beyond reducing pesticide use to incentivize regenerative land care practices that will increase biodiversity, reduce water use, improve soil health, and take campus sustainability efforts to the next level.” Among the first campuses to be awarded certification are Seattle University, the University of Washington Bothell, and Cascadia College—all receiving Platinum level certification. PJC's Fred Newcombe is on the Certification Advisory Board and we look forward to seeing the changes Re:wild Your Campus continues to make in sustainable land care!

To learn more about Re:Wild Your Campus and their Green Ground Certification, visit their [website](#).



KEEP UP! Follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) & check out our [Blog](#). We post industry news, events, products, & cultural practices.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Landscape Conference and Trade Expo

The largest outdoor landscape expo for Hudson Valley, brought to you by New York State Turf & Landscape Association (NYSTLA). Over an acre of vendors and deals: seminars, food trucks, raffles, and more.

Aug 15th | Hartsdale, NY | all day event

come
see us!



LEARN MORE



ELA Organic Turf Care Webinar

Ecological Landscape Alliance's webinar series is featuring Sean Breckin! Sean's covering the development of Organic Turf Care programs, soil health, turf grass products, and a live Q&A.

Aug 17th | Virtual | 6:00 pm - 7:00 EDT



LEARN MORE



NOFA's Online Accreditation Course

The next Organic Land Care Accreditation Course course will be available starting September 1, 2023. The self-paced format allows you to complete the course at your own pace, any time during the fall.

Virtual beginning Sept. 1, 2023



LEARN MORE



125th Annual NEPA Fall Conference & Trade Show

A time for professionals from all outdoor industries to meet and grow through education and networking. Attend sessions, networking events, and meet with commercial representatives on Cape Cod!

Sept 13th-15th | South Yarmouth, MA



LEARN MORE



MLP & MAA's Fall Field Day

There's something for everyone on your team with next level instructors and info sessions; demos of the today's latest equipment; live music, and a delicious BBQ cookout!

Sept 27th | Walpole, MA | 1:00 - 6:00 pm

come
see us!



LEARN MORE



NOFA's In-Person Accreditation Course

In partnership with Non-Toxic Portsmouth and Non-Toxic Dover: a 4-day course on the principles and practices of organic land care. 30 hours of instruction/site visits for certification as an AOLCP.

Oct 30th-Nov 2nd | Portsmouth, NH | 9:00am - 4:30pm



LEARN MORE



INDUSTRY NEWS cont.

NYC PARKS GOING PESTICIDE-FREE

"NEW YORK—A pilot program to prevent pesticide use in city parks is already showing signs of success. The city is working with a variety of environmental advocates to promote a safer place to play."... Shout out to former City Council member Ben Kallos for introducing the bill to ban the use of toxic pesticides in city parks, playing fields, playgrounds and open space in 2021 and ongoing support from Beyond Pesticides, Osborne Organics, Stonyfield Organics & a coalition of local organizations!

READ MORE



NFL'S PUSH FOR NATURAL TURF

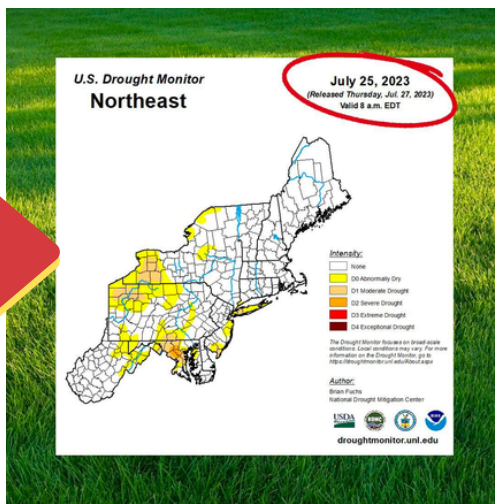
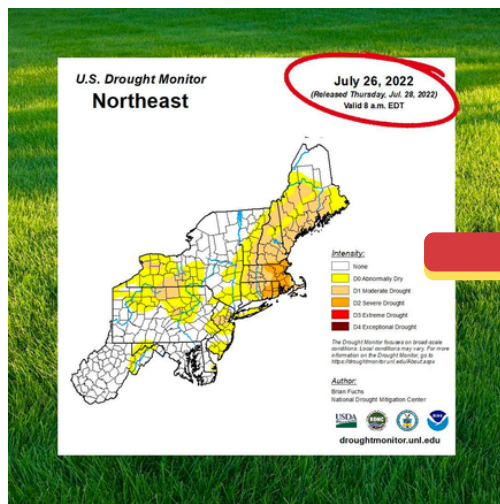


"The Buffalo Bills have officially broken ground on a new \$1.5 billion stadium at Orchard Park, N.Y., and when the team takes the new field for the first time in 2026, the field will be natural grass....half of the NFL's teams will play on grass during the upcoming 2023 season."

We love seeing this shift to natural turf for the health of players and the environment!

READ MORE





DROUGHT MONITOR

The Northeast has been seeing A LOT of rain this summer. While the turf is feeling pretty happy about it, we'd like to see the sun a bit more often :)

PEST SPOTLIGHT: GRUBS by Fred Newcombe

In the Northeast, beetles have been flying and laying eggs throughout July. In August, these eggs hatch and turn into grubs that feed on the root systems of turf. In October, before migrating down to over-winter, a grub infestation can take down a lawn. So, know how to treat grubs organically..

Types of Beetles that tend to be of concern:

- European Chafer: a troublesome species in NH & Eastern MA.
- Japanese Beetle: perhaps the most widely distributed grub species in New England.
- Asiatic Garden Beetle: fairly widespread in Southern New England.
- Oriental Beetle: common in the coastal regions.

Reasons for Grub Decline

We've seen fewer instances of grubs through the years. This decrease likely due to:

1. Removal of Attractor Plants — we've made it a point to recommend the removal of attractor plants. Roses, Japanese maple, grapes zinnias, and mountain ash all help to bring beetles to town.
2. Healthier Soil Food Web — soils with healthy biodiversity increase earthworms, ants, springtails, fungi and bacteria—all potential predators to feed on beetle eggs.
3. Drought Conditions — grubs require high soil moisture for egg survival. So, grub populations do best in soil that are consistently moist from late June into September. Perhaps another reason to avoid irrigating your lawn throughout the summer and simply allow it to go dormant.
4. Mowing High — contributes to a more vigorous root mass allowing it to better withstand the chance of damage from grubs feeding on the roots.



How to Scout for Grubs

It is best to scout for grubs in mid August – mid September. To scout, cut three sides of a square turf section, about one square foot in size. Fold back the turf and examine the roots about 3 – 4" deep. Count the number of white grubs you find. You may wish to do this in at least 3 to 4 different spots around the lawn.

Treating Grubs in Your Lawn

If you find more than 7–8 grubs per area, it is best to treat. The last several years we treated using cedar oil out of a backpack sprayer. We used to have a lot of success treating with hB nematodes. However, nematodes are aquatic and require moist soil conditions to move around. With how dry it has been the past few years, in addition to water bans, we have not found conditions favorable for hB nematodes to be an effective treatment option.

PJC's recommended Cedar Cure controls white grubs and other pests. This product triggers the erosion of the exoskeleton of insect eggs and larvae, which results in their dehydration, subsequently rendering their pre-life status DBH (dead before hatch). Visit our [product page](#) for more info, or [contact us](#) for product pricing. Now that you know how to treat grubs organically, stay on top of it—your lawns will thank you!

BEFORE & AFTER

We love hearing from our happy customers!



Before Photo: 2016

The lawn had a conventional synthetic program for many years.



After Photo: taken Summer 2023

According to the owner, "This area takes a beating from road salt and runoff but it has greatly improved over time due to a program from PJC Organic. And we even pay LESS than we did at the start. Healthy soil requires less inputs and labor over time, and that saves money. Organic practices grow healthy plants!"

FEATURED PRODUCTS



PJC ProHealthy Turf CHARGE-S3

Our proprietary granular soil conditioner, bio-stimulant, & natural nutrient source all-in-one. "S3" because it helps to improve Soil chemistry, Soil structure and Soil biological activity.

Benefits of CHARGE-S3:

1. Increases nitrogen fixation, nutrient retention and cycling.
2. Makes Ca, Mg, K, P & other micronutrients more bioavailable.
3. Aids in water retention & absorption of inhibitory compounds.
4. Provides consistent application of organic matter to your soil without the risk of introducing unwanted weed seeds.

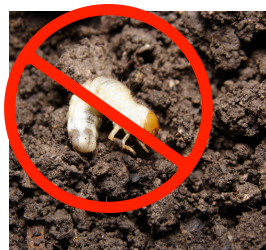
GRASS SEED — prices are coming down!

A late-summer over seed provides the best chance of establishment. In the Northeast, the ideal window for over seeding is mid-Aug. to late-Sept; warm days, cool nights & 50+°F soil temps.



PJC Organic's seed blends have been evaluated and developed using the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP). We have a variety of TTTF, Perennial Ryegrass, Kentucky Bluegrass and Fine Fescue blends to suit your needs.

Germination time, soil temps, cultural practices, soil conditions and use are ALL critical for results. Read our blog "[Beat Weeds With Grass Seed](#)" for more info on turf grass varieties, and the pros & cons of aerating versus seed slicing.



CEDAR OIL

Used to control white grubs, mosquitoes, ticks, ants, armyworms, billbugs, chinch bugs, cutworms, sod webworms and other landscape pests by stifling the insects' receptors.

Exposure to the cedarwood oil during larval stage triggers the erosion of the exoskeleton, subsequently rendering their pre-life status Dead Before Hatch.

VIEW PRODUCT PAGE

