

APRIL 2025

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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SPRING TURF TIPS



As we look to a new season, remembering where we left off last fall will be important in setting expectations. At the end of October 2024 most areas in the Northeast were somewhere between abnormally dry and a severe drought. These conditions carried well into the winter. As such, fall overseeding might not have yielded the results hoped for, resulting in thinner turf and more repairs this spring.

1. Soil Test

A must for any organic turf care customer! Soil test results provide the starting point for program recommendations. We recommend you test every 2-3 years for pH, buffer pH, organic matter, CEC and Ca:Mg. The results take the guesswork out of product requirements, helps to set customer expectations, and keeps your sale objective. [Run your soil tests through PJC Organic](#) and we'll provide you with recommendations in an easy to understand format.

2. Spring Clean-Up

No matter how much time you spend on fall clean-ups, winter has its own plans. Over the winter, grass naturally dies back and goes dormant. Dormant grass is not the same as thatch, and in an organic system, thatch is generally not a problem as the soil biology breaks it down. So be careful - aggressive raking and dethatching can damage the crown of grass as it comes out of dormancy, remove valuable organic matter, and create a thin lawn for crabgrass and other weeds to take hold later in the season. It is important to monitor soil temperatures so that you are not expecting the lawn to be doing something that it is still too cold for. Remove any wet leaves and branches from smothering grass, prune trees and shrubs, edge and mulch your garden beds.

3. Pay Attention to Weeds

Is this the first thing you think of when you hear "spring organic turf tips"? Sure, dandelions and clover will be starting to pop as soon as temperatures allow, often before when our cool season grasses start to grow. These plants can get a foothold on local soil nutrients and crowd out turf plants before they can grow. So, be proactive - the [Fiskar 4 claw stand up weed puller](#) works great on dandelions and bagging clippings when flowers are present will help mitigate spread. Word of caution: Do not try to mow them away as they will grow at shorter heights than our grass would like. (cont. p2)

SPRING TURF TIPS (cont...)

4. Repair

Pay attention to areas where snow was piled or heavy foot traffic, as these are prone to soil compaction and compaction weeds (e.g., plantain, crabgrass). Repair damaged areas from winter puddles, snow plows, and areas affected by snow-melt applications on walkways and driveways. Bare soil is the first place weeds take hold, so address thin or stressed areas promptly. Once soil temperatures reach 50°F, slice-seed or top dress and overseed with a seed mix heavy in perennial rye. Remember, lawns may be thinner this spring due to poor germination from fall overseeding affected by the drought. Note: unless it's an athletic field, we recommend seed slicing vs core aeration in spring, as core aeration can bring weed seeds to the surface, encouraging germination.

5. Mowing

Mowing is the most critical component in a successful OTC Program. Once you've finished spring clean-up and repairs – mow high or perform a “clean-up” cut. This helps your turf to stand up straighter. In addition, this practice chips up any leftover organic matter missed in your spring clean-up. It also gives you a chance to see if anything needs to be adjusted or repaired on your mower. Once your cleanup is done, lower your height of cut to 2 ½” for the first couple of cuts to push lateral growth, raising HOC to 3 ½” by mid-May. Finally, return clippings to get valuable organic matter back into the soil.

6. Irrigation Check

If you have an irrigation system, check for damage over the winter. Replace any heads that may have been broken. Check your watering schedule. When it comes time - water deep (1” week), infrequently, and in the morning. Over watering can lead to soil compaction.

7. PJC ProHealthy Turf All-Natural Organic Fertilizer

Once soil temps are consistently above 50, and grass is actively growing, apply your 1st application of PJC ProHealthy Turf All Natural Organic Fertilizer. Our organic fertilizers contain water insoluble nitrogen and are a food source for the soil biology. The biology breaks down the fertilizer and stores it until the grass needs it lasting 6 - 8 weeks.

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

MINUTEMAN LANDSCAPING

Throughout the season, we are highlighting different customers to get their perspective on organic lawn care. Below is a recap of our time talking with Jim Agabedis Owner & President of Minuteman Landscaping, Concord, MA with a degree in Finance & Entrepreneurial Studies, is a NOFA AOLCP, MA Certified Horticulturist and Speaker on Organic Lawn Care. Jim has been a PJC customer for 19 years - WOW!



JIM AGABEDIS

1. How did you get started in the landscape industry?

I started the business in 1984, while a sophomore at Babson College as a way to help pay for school and I've always loved landscaping. By my senior year, I had 360 clients. I would bring my truck and trailer to school, then after class, mow some lawns, prune some bushes, do a cleanup, go to baseball practice or hockey practice, and then home. The guys from the sports teams were my employees.

2. What services do you offer?

I've learned over the years that you can't be all things to all people and serve them well—it dilutes your quality, especially if you are a small company. We currently offer: maintenance (mowing, cleanups, mulching, and pruning); lawn care (organic fertilization, seeding, aeration, etc.); plant health care; mosquito & tick control; and garden design & install. We subcontract irrigation, masonry, and tree work. We have also gone totally electric with commercial mowers. This decision dovetails with the philosophy of our company, and the mowers are finally where they need to be, while string trimmers and blowers have a way to go in power and duration of use.

3. How did you get into organic land care?

I had a grandmother from Greece who was an organic gardener before she knew what it was. She grew produce on a 3,500sf lot in Brighton, MA and, I grew up helping her, and that's where I got the concept of organic. I started self-educating by taking classes, listening to speakers on the radio, wherever I could get information. I told my grandmother one day, 'I found this miracle stuff that we can spray on our trees and we won't get those worms.' (cont. p3)

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT **Minuteman Landscaping (cont...)**

And she's like, 'Oh, great, can we drink it?'. And I said, 'No, it's a chemical'. She said, 'Then why would we eat it?' ...and that's where my preliminary philosophy on chemicals developed.

Down the line, I read an article called "Healthy Lawns Without Chemicals" and learned about the different carcinogens and ingredients that were in lawn care products. After that article, I put it together that this may not be as healthy of an environment to be working in as I once thought it was. So, I told my clients that we couldn't work for them if they were going to continue to use chemicals. I didn't want to profit at the expense of my employees or my own health. To make a long story short - we went down to about 60 clients.

4. How has your business grown since committing to organic land care?

When we made the commitment to organic lawn care, the business continued to prosper steadily and grow. In the '90s people started to become more environmentally conscious. The organic market was growing because the communities we were working in were progressive communities with an informed consumer. Not too many people were doing what we were doing, and we became a niche business. People who really wanted that service were seeking us out, and word of mouth was growing.

At a key time, I met a salesman from a well-sought-out tree company, and he started referring us to a lot of their special clients. Suddenly, we got invited into estimates that I never would've been invited to given where I was starting from. For me personally, I view it as God's intervention in my career. The Lord really has guided me through this whole process, and it would not be accurate if I didn't include that because every step of the way, God's brought the right workers, the right clients, the right connections, the right vendors that are so like-minded in our profession and life philosophy.

Then, we [Minuteman & PJC] started working together. This provided us with a product line that we could use to start addressing specific issues. PJC's soil testing services and soil amendments gave us a program where we could compete with other companies offering a viable option. Today, we service approx 300 accounts in the greater Concord, MA area and have 6-7 employees.

5. What's your approach to organic lawn care?

We have a "ground-up" philosophy. What we're trying to do is mimic and emulate nature. When people think that organic is something new, it's not: It's the original form of gardening, it's the original form of trying to grow things. We're restoring the microbiology in the soil and then growing things from the bottom up with healthy soil that has the right soil amendments to make it work. We build healthy soil—and that's where your products help us—that's the lifeblood of our program.

Soil testing has been the key for us because it gives us an accurate roadmap. It's proving out what we've always said; that with an organic program, it's a little bit more front loaded with heavier expense in the beginning. Then, once you get things going, it really starts to moderate and give us some lower cost service points. Our typical program consists of three PJC ProHealthy Turf Organic Fertilizer app's, soil testing with corresponding amendments, over seeding and grub control using milky spore, nematodes, and cedar oil depending on the grub species.

We also spend time setting customer expectations. We've learned over the years to be preemptive in our initial meetings by telling them what to expect. They're not disappointed when they see what we've already told them will happen.

Working with PJC Organic is great because it's one stop shopping. I don't have to go to multiple vendors; I get a consistent product; I get it delivered in a timely fashion; it's good quality; and I get results. I can tell I'm getting results because the soil tests don't lie. The soil test tells me what's actually happening in the soil—which is unseen to my eye—but then what I see above ground is making a difference.

6. Closing thoughts?

At Minuteman Landscaping we're not trying to work against nature, we're working with it; and you guys [PJC] have made it easy for us. You guys are helpful. You go way outta your way to help us do our jobs better. You're just so invested in the process and in your clients. I may be a service provider, and you may be a product provider, but you're also providing education, advice, and you're also pre-screening the products we use.

Minuteman Landscaping services Acton, Arlington, Concord, Dover, Framingham, Lexington, Lincoln, Maynard, Natick, Newton, Sudbury, Wayland, Wellesley, Weston, Westwood, and Winchester. For more information about their business and services, visit their [website](#) or [facebook](#) page.



WEED SPOTLIGHT: CLOVER

As turf grass emerges from dormancy, clover often beats it out of the starting blocks. Clover, despite its reputation as a weed, is appreciated by some. It offers several benefits that, depending on client visual expectations, make it a valuable component of lawns and landscapes.

Benefits of Clover

Historically, clover was included in grass seed blends. This is because clover fixes nitrogen from the atmosphere, enriches the soil, and naturally fertilizes nearby plants. Additionally, it is highly effective at out-competing other invasive weeds, therefore reducing the need for herbicides. Lastly, clover provides food for pollinators.

Cons of Clover

While there are benefits to clover, notably this plant can be problematic for athletic fields. Clover compromises the integrity of a playing surface. It doesn't suit athletes playing sports because it doesn't allow for consistent ball rolling speed. Also, inconsistent field surfaces create difficulty for cleats to gain traction when changing direction.

Mitigating Clover All-Naturally

Low fertility is a common driver of clover growth. A balanced fertility program, delivering approximately 2-3 pounds of organic nitrogen per 1,000 square feet each season, is a good starting point. If results fall short, consider adding a 4th application or switching to a higher-nitrogen organic fertilizer. (cont. p 4)

Clover



- uniform, round leaves
- three leaflets (4 if you're lucky!)
- flower may be white or pink (depending on the species)

Vs.

Oxalis



- heart-shaped leaves
- green or purple leaves
- flower may be white, pink, or yellow (depending on the species)

PRODUCT PROMOS

BOOST+S3

Designed to meet your soil's needs coming out of Winter! BOOST+S3 is a soil conditioner and bio-stimulant. It combines plant proteins and essential minerals like calcium, sulfur, and iron with 2.75% humate to improve soil chemistry, soil biology, and soil structure. This product helps decrease compaction, enhances nutrient retention, and jump-starts early chlorophyll production with chelated iron. With its high mineral content, it's the perfect choice for March to May applications, giving your turf a head start this spring.

GRASS SEED

Beat weeds with seed

Soil temps, germination timeframes, and pH all affect growing healthy grass. In the Northeast, the window to over seed in Spring caps by the end of May. Read our blog "[Choosing the Right Spring Grass Seed](#)" AND check out our

PREMIUM GRASS SEED

PRICES HAVE GONE DOWN!

REQUEST
PRICING >

Healthy levels of organic matter (OM) help buffer soil conditions and promote resilient turf. Increase OM by top-dressing, raising the height of cut during mowing, and maintaining deep, healthy roots that contribute to OM as they die off.

An aggressive over seeding program is key to thicken turf and crowd out clover. Aim to minimally over seed twice annually. In the spring, seed before May 15th. Seed between August 15th and September 15th in late summer or fall.

Seed Varieties

When overseeding in the spring, focus on grasses that germinate quickly, such as Perennial Rye Grass and Tall Fescue. These establish more rapidly in the cooler spring conditions and help create immediate ground coverage. In the fall, prioritize slower-germinating grass—like Kentucky bluegrass—which benefit from the more extended establishment period and cooler, stable temperatures that encourage robust root development. Selecting the right grass for the season ensures better results and improved turf density.

Proper Mowing Practices

Proper mowing is one of the most critical cultural practices for turf health. Maintain a higher mowing height throughout the growing season to improve stress resistance, enhance turf appearance, and reduce light penetration that encourages clover germination. All the while, return grass clippings to help boost organic matter.

Organic Turf Care Next Steps

Managing clover starts with addressing soil health and working proactively during the spring and fall to establish healthy turf. By improving soil fertility, increasing organic matter, and following proper cultural practices, landscapers can minimize clover naturally without the need for harsh chemicals.

If you're ready to take the next step in implementing an organic turf care program, PJC can help. From soil testing to customized recommendations and organic fertilizer solutions, we make the process simpler and more effective. Contact PJC today for support in creating healthy, weed-resistant lawns and athletic fields.

THE NEWS

BAYER MAY HALT U.S. ROUNDUP SALES WITHOUT LEGAL PROTECTIONS ([investing.com](https://www.investing.com))

"Bayer has informed U.S. lawmakers that it may cease sales of its Roundup weedkiller unless stronger legal protections are put in place to shield the company from product liability lawsuits..." [Read More >](#)

CAMBRIDGE ANNOUNCES BAN ON GAS-POWERED LEAF BLOWERS ([cambridgema.gov](https://www.cambridgema.gov)) [Read More >](#)

BAYER HIT WITH \$2 BILLION ROUNDUP VERDICT IN GEORGIA CANCER CASE ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com)) [Read More >](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fundamentals of Botany Session

Through discussion, lecture, and hands-on lab work, this class begins with basic plant anatomy, exploring how every aspect of a plant works to sustain photosynthesis, respiration, and water and mineral uptake.

Fri. April 25 & Sat. May 3 | 9:30 AM – 3 PM | Boothbay, ME

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2025 CCLA Safety Meeting

From Calm to Crisis: Preparing Landscape Teams for the Unexpected

This presentation will equip landscape teams with the tools and strategies to handle unexpected emergencies on job sites, from weather crises to safety incidents.

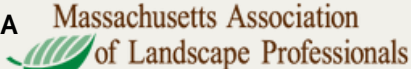
April 30 | 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM | Hyannis MA

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MALP Meeting: Irrigation Management

This session will explore the reasons behind changes in the irrigation industry and opportunities moving forward.

Tues. April 15 | 4 PM-7 PM | Walpole, MA 

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Webinar: Native Shrubs –

The Unsung Heroes of Ecological Landscapes

Join Dan Wilder, ELA board member and Director of Applied Ecology at Norcross Wildlife Foundation for this lecture that aims to encourage you to pay more attention to the ecological value of shrubs.

Fri. May 2 | 12pm-1:30pm

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The 2025 Spring NEPA Meeting - (.3CEU's)

Educational training opportunity designed for Parks & Rec, Sports Field Managers, School Maintenance, Municipalities, Universities, and more! Commercial Sponsorships Available! Open to Everyone.

May 8 | Manchester, CT

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PRODUCT PROMO

ProHealthy Turf All-Natural Organic Fertilizers

All our organic fertilizers are made with premium all-natural ingredients and a food source for soil biology while adding organic matter to the soil.

ProHealthy Turf OMRI listed 6-0-6, and OMRI listed 8-0-6 blends are great all year round!

ProHealthy Turf 7-0-2+ is a 2-in-1 fertilizer and soil conditioner. The 2% water soluble nitrogen from the blood meal is easily available in cooler soils for those who want to get out there early and the 5% water insoluble nitrogen provides a longer feed. The added humate increases the soil nutrient holding capacity and provides a consistent, slow-release nitrogen source for sustained growth. These easy-to-apply granular products have zero phosphorous, no striping or burning, and keep turf thriving without the use of urea, municipal waste, or manure.

21st Annual NE Turf Show

Full Day for Parks & Rec, Sports Turf Managers, School Maintenance, Municipalities & Universities.

Wed. June 18 | Phillips Exeter Academy, MA

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We regularly post industry news, events, products, & cultural practices.

