



Lawler Park Landscape

June 2016

A Community Newsletter

\$Free

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A-B-C's of Lawn Mowing

Mowing your grass properly can result in beautiful and healthy lawn throughout the summer season. Here's a few tips:

- **Keep mower blades sharp.** Sharpen or buy new blades, as needed. Sharp blades cut grass. Dull blades tear grass, leaving a lawn grayish-brown with ridged ends, which allows diseases and fungi to enter.
- **Maintain your mower** as oil and gas leaks kill grass. Also, don't refill the mower gas tank while on the lawn.
- **Never mow off more than 1/3 of the grass blades at a time.** Properly mowed grass will encourage growth, support more roots, and develop a deeper root system to find water and nutrients in the soil. DO NOT scalp or cut the lawn too short. This forces grass to re-grow blades, not deepen roots, and the lawn more prone to weeds. The ideal height for Bermuda after mowing is 1.5" to 2.5".



- **Mow down in increments, if the lawn gets too high.** Raise the mower height so that you are only cutting 1/3 of the grass blade. Wait 3 or 4 days, then mow the lawn again at its regular height. If you mow it down all at once, the lawn will look stressed, brown, and unhealthy.

- **Alternate your mow pattern.** Mowing the same pattern (and direction) each time will cause ruts in the yard, and distinct "mow-lines", which will also allow water to settle (in the ruts) instead of soaking the entire lawn. By alternating mow patterns, the grass will stand up nice and tall. Rotate your mow pattern: "north and south" one week, then "east and west" the next, and diagonally, etc.

- **Mow a dry lawn.** Cutting wet grass can result in an uneven cut.

- **In extreme heat, mow your lawn slightly higher.** Higher grass blades can help a stressed lawn. It also encourages more photosynthesis, naturally induced environmental nutrients, and deeper roots.

- **Grass clippings.** Bag clippings from the season's first mow, and then mow often enough to avoid bagging. Nutrients stored in the 1/3 grass blades tips (left on the lawn after mowing) will recycle and help fertilize, keeping your lawn greener longer. However, rake too much excess grass (thatch), otherwise it can kill the grass underneath and cause undesirable brown spots.

- **Don't scalp Bermuda grass, unless it is the first mow of the season.** In the spring when your Bermuda is just starting to green up, and all chances of frost has passed, scalp your Bermuda and bag it. This will remove the dead grass that has kept the roots insulated all winter, and enable the sun to warm the ground more quickly and give the Bermuda a jump start on greening up.

- **Complete the mowing cycle** by weeding flowerbeds, trimming around trees and beds, edging sidewalks, blowing grass off walkways, and trimming bushes.



Pesky Mosquitoes!

There's nothing more annoying than mosquitoes buzzing about and biting, while trying to enjoy some outdoor fun. Mosquitoes can be dangerous and are responsible for nearly 1 million deaths worldwide each year. A common disease they spread in Texas is West Nile Virus (WNV), but a new concern is the Zika Virus, moving in from South America. Mosquitoes are also a culprit of heartworms in pets.

Before mosquitoes breed, congregate, bite, and drive you indoors, consider some ways to keep them at bay. **Eliminate any standing water** by emptying containers that may have collected rainwater such as flower pots, clogged downspouts, gutters, birdbaths, kiddie pools, shoes, etc. Consider planting some herbs like rosemary, thyme, and lemongrass which are known for their natural insect-repellant scents. You can also try other deterrents like citronella candles and bug sprays, or choose to purchase a bug zapper. These tips can help keep mosquitoes at bay and make for a more pleasant outdoor season.



Check out the Yard of the Month for June!

Congratulations to our neighbors at 7985 Lawler Park Drive!



Will you be next?

To nominate a yard, please email us at: LawlerParkLandscape@gmail.com.

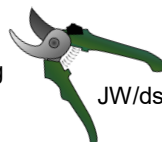
The winner will receive a \$25 gift to Calloway's Nursery!

The Scoop on Tree Stakes

Builders often stake newly planted trees to help support them initially, giving the root system a chance to establish itself in the soil and to develop a strong anchor. **Tree stakes are not permanent** fixtures though, and need to be removed eventually to benefit the tree. If left too long, stakes can hinder a tree's growth and development.

Trees need to be able to sway freely in the wind to develop stronger trunks. In general, a tree should not require

added support for more than six months to a year. Tree stakes should be removed after one growing season; however, exact timing can vary with the species of tree, as some may develop more quickly than others. If in doubt about removing the stakes after six months or so, call in your landscaper for input.



JW/dsm