

# THE TURF TIMES



## Welcome to our newsletter.

Our goal is to provide accurate, researched information to develop and maintain your ideal lawn or athletic field.

Each issue contains an article written by Blue Grass staff, as well as information from university researchers and tips from area experts. This issue contains a link to an article on aeration by Deborah Brown & Don Taylor of the University of Minnesota.

Feel free to contact us with questions or suggestions at any time. 319-842-2165 or [sarah@bgsod.com](mailto:sarah@bgsod.com)

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### In this issue

*Winter is coming...*

- Aeration & Thatch Control

### Upcoming topic

- Broadleaf Control



**Winter is coming...** and it is time to put good practices to use to encourage the healthiest possible lawn. In recent weeks, we have received several questions regarding thatch build-up in yards. **Here are easy ways to promote faster decomposition of your thatch, which improves soil quality and boosts the overall health of your yard.**

### The Importance of Aeration

An unsung hero of the lawn maintenance dream team is aeration. You have probably seen the aftermath of a core aerifier before if you have seen a lawn covered in small dirt plugs and full of tiny holes.

The University of Minnesota writes, “aeration promotes better moisture and air penetration into compacted soils, [which] helps to establish a deeper and healthier root system and also stimulates the microbial activity involved in decomposing the thatch layer.” (For more information read here: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/yard-garden/lawns/thatch-control/>) Aeration also is a ‘green’ lawn practice because it reduces run off from your lawn, keeping nutrients in the soil, and minimizes soil erosion and wash outs.



**“De-thatching is a last resort. Most thatch control happens with good mowing and fertilizing practices, along with routine aeration.**

- MIKE LOAN, OWNER, BLUE GRASS ENTERPRISES

Thatch build-up in your yard can also be reduced by mowing frequently (never cutting more than 1/3 of the green growth) and varying the direction in which you mow to help improve the grain of your turf. For more information on mowing, read our tips on mowing at <http://www.bgsod.com/mowing>. Mike Loan, owner of Blue Grass Enterprises, only recommends de-thatching as a last resort. Most thatch control happens with good mowing and fertilizing practices, along with routine aeration.

Providing the food your lawn needs helps to improve the soil quality in your yard and the health of the plants. Soil testing is recommended to ensure you are providing the right nutrients to your land. Read more about soil testing at <http://www.bgsod.com/soil-sampling>. The staff at Blue Grass will interpret the tests and make recommendations for a feeding program to get your lawn in top form.

### Pro Tip from Blue Grass Staff:

Applying fertilizer before aerating is very important. Think of it like a doctor who wants a patient to be as healthy as possible before surgery. Give your lawn a starter fertilizer a week before to prepare for the stress of aeration. Recovery will be noticeably faster.