



Through the Garden Window



Creating the Scenery of Your Life

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Serving the High Desert and Inland Empire.

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- Lawn Aeration
- Weed Control
- Pre-emergents
- Color Changes

Artificial Grass... Is it for you?

We all would like to have more time. We only get 24 hours everyday and they all seem to be spoken for.

That's why when a "new" product comes along and promises a savings of time and effort while still looking beautiful, the appeal is instant. That's the lure of artificial grass.

Artificial grass is touted to remain beautiful year-round while requiring little or no maintenance. New artificial grass products are looking more and more like the real thing.

Take a gander at a few samples and you will see a much more sophisticated product. Even the low-end grasses of today are much more realistic than the high-end products of yesteryear.

But is it for you? Well, that depends on what you are looking for it to do for your landscape.

The Good:

1. It will give the look of a lush lawn to your landscape.
2. Cut down on the water required to create or maintain the lush look of a natural lawn.
3. Works in places that are difficult to get natural lawn to grow. For example slopes or shady areas or areas troubled by rabbits nibbling on natural grass.
4. Generally, allergy free.

The Bad:

1. Artificial grass won't cool your home the way a natural grass lawn will. Natural grass lawns release oxygen

and cool the air, as much as 30 degrees cooler than asphalt or 15 degrees cooler than dirt. Artificial grass has been measured to be as much as 60-70 degrees hotter than a natural grass lawn on a hot day.

2. Artificial Grass does not filter pollution the way a natural lawns does by acting as a natural filter for water run-off and dust.
3. Won't save lots of money. Artificial turf has a large up-front cost. Natural turf is cheaper to install initially and it might take years to recoup the cost of artificial turf in water savings and maintenance, if at all.
4. Artificial grass does require occasional raking, washing off and grooming of blades to keep it looking good.

The Ugly:

1. There are concerns about the polypropylene composition of the grass and/or the possible rubber infill used creating nasty fumes when the temperatures rise.
2. It does not break down in landfills and some no longer accept it.
3. A 2005 New England Journal of Medicine study found a high rate of methicillin-resistant staphylococcus, or MRSA, bacterial infection in artificial-turf scrapes among St. Louis Rams players. Turf burn scrapes can result in MRSA infections and disinfectant is recommended for turf in athletic situations. There is a trend in offering disinfecting services to the residential market as well.

As landscapers, (the ORIGINAL green business), we prefer natural grass to artificial grass as a superior home environment. For most of our clients this makes the most sense for them as well.

Your Lawn... Are you mowing it right?

The impact of a beautiful green lawn can affect both your mood and the value of your home.

Mowing it right means more than just the look of the lawn. Mowing is essential to keep most lawns healthy. Mowed lawns have greater tolerance to heat and drought and are less susceptible to weed and pest problems.

Mow your lawn frequently enough that you only cut no more than one third of its height. That means every 5 to 10 days depending on the type of grass, the season and growth patterns. Regular mowing keeps the lawn healthy and encourages new denser growth.

Mowing height is critical. The proper height to cut depends on the type of grass you have and the temperature. Cool season grasses like perennial rye grass and blue grass prefer to be cut at 2 to 3 inches and fescue a little higher at 3 to 3 ½ inches. Use the higher number in the warm summer months. Warm season grasses like Bermuda and Bent grasses however thrive at lower heights such as ¼ to ½ inches.

Mowing cool-season grasses too low and infrequently during hot weather places the grass under stress, requiring excessive watering and makes it more susceptible to pest and weed problems and restricts root growth.

Change your mowing pattern. Mowing in the same direction all the time creates compaction from the mower wheels and results in a “nap” or direction of growth to the grass. Develop different mowing patterns for your lawn and change the mowing pattern weekly for a healthier lawn.

Make sure your mower blades are sharp. Dull blades tear rather than cut the grass, resulting in an ugly whitish look to the lawn, and encourages pest and disease problems. It also requires more fuel than sharp blades. Sharpen every 7 hours of use, more often in harsh conditions.

Allow clippings to recycle back into the lawn when mowing. As long as you observe the 1/3 rule, and cutting your lawn when dry, the clippings (which are mostly water) will filter down into the grass and contribute to your lawns nitrogen needs and reduce the waste that goes to the landfill.

My Favorite Recipes



Classic Vanilla Ice Cream

2 cups heavy cream
2 cups half & half
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/8 teaspoon of salt

Mix all ingredients until sugar dissolves and pour into your ice cream mixer can follow instructions on your particular ice cream maker and enjoy!

For a variation, during the last two minutes of freezing in your ice cream freezer, add 1 cup fresh strawberries that have been cleaned, sliced, and mixed with 1/3 cup of sugar and aged for 24 hours.

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Our way of saying....



(760) 868-6104

Call during the month of July
and get \$15.00 off your sprinkler repair or audit
Must mention code 711-S

How much water does my lawn need??

That's the most frequent question we get from clients. Everybody wants a set schedule to water their lawn or plants.

I know you are just looking for X number of minutes for X number of days. But, it can pay off to know the why and when to water from a more detailed perspective. From the type of plants, to the weather, to the kind of soil, to varying micro-climates on the same lot, every landscape is different. There is no "one size fits all" when it comes to watering.

There really is just one main rule of watering: Give the proper amount of water for the plant's needs (keeping it healthy) before the plant uses up all the available water in the soil (and the plant dies).

Keep mind, that you can't save water on your plants. You can't reduce the amount of water your plants and lawn NEED. Period. You CAN, however be more efficient with the water you apply to give the proper amount of water WHERE and WHEN the plant needs it. OR you can select plants and lawn that REQUIRE less water to be healthy.

How MUCH water should I apply? You can determine this by calculating how much water your lawn needs, adjusting for weather conditions (ET_o), your sprinkler application rate and the efficiency of your sprinkler system. Since the need for water varies throughout the year depending on the weather, you should regularly adjust your watering times.

First, let's find out how much water your lawn needs. The California Irrigation Management Information System (Cimis) collects weather data from over 120 weather stations all over the state and sends it to a central computer which analyzes the data and calculates reference evapotranspiration (ET_o - for grass reference) (ET_o) is a loss of water to the atmosphere by the combined processes of evaporation from soil and plant surfaces and transpiration from plants. They publish this information for all of us to use in fine tuning our watering practices so we can save time, water and money.

Since most of the CIMIS stations are sitting on standardized grass surfaces, reference evapotranspiration is commonly referred to as "ET_o" in this web site. This is perfect for our purposes. So we don't have to do the lengthy calculations, they have published a map with the average ET_o for all of California. See the map here: <http://www.cimis.water.ca.gov/cimis/images/etomap.jpg> . Our goal when watering is to replace this "lost" water.

Looking at the map for say the high desert (area 17) we see that July's water that we need to replace is 9.92 inches per month. So we need to add 9.92 inches of water during the month of July to adequately water our lawn if our sprinkler systems are 100% efficient. If you look at the map for other months, you will see that the inches of water you need to replace, varies from month to month mainly due to longer or shorter days and weather conditions. We still need to adjust our water applied to allow for the uniformity of our sprinkler system since all systems are not 100% efficient. On average most systems are 60% uniformity. Add 60% more water to the 9.92 inches and you will get needed water of 15.87 inches to apply. You can see where fine tuning your system to be more efficient will pay off in less water use! You will still need to adjust by observation, to actual conditions. Seems simple right?

OK, you now know how MUCH to water. How do you know how many inches of water your sprinkler system is putting down? By doing a simple audit of your sprinkler system. **We will go over the steps to audit your sprinkler system in our next newsletter.** Or if you want help with it right away, give us a call we can help you do it, or do it for you.

Still have questions? Please send email to Darrell@perfectionlandscape.com or call (760) 868-6104

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