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**Natural/Organic Lawn Care**  
**Natural Deer Repellent Service**

**Tick Repellent**  
**Landscape Maintenance**

Monthly Newsletter

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## September Garden Tips

## A Personal Message

\* We've noticed some beautiful plant material in local nurseries lately. As the weather grows cooler, you may want to consider some color for your fall gardens.

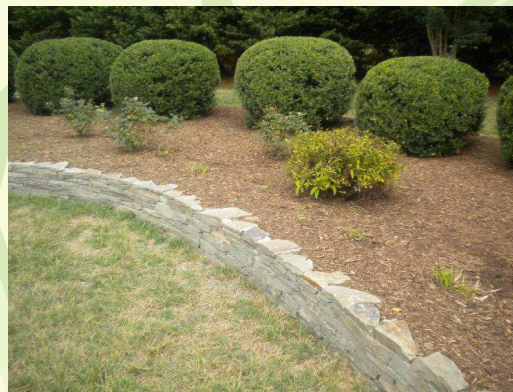
\* Does your garden need mulch to keep plant material protected this winter? A thin layer of additional mulch to topdress landscape beds may be necessary this fall. Mulch helps to conserve moisture in the soil as well as to prevent weed growth. It also provides a more even (warmer) temperature for plant material as the ground freezes. Often, the ground heaves as it freezes and thaws, forcing the root systems of many plants up from the soil and exposing them. Mulch helps prevent this from happening.



*Here's a freshly mulched landscape bed ready for winter.*

\* Your landscape beds may be looking a little shabby by this time of year. This is your garden's way of asking for help. Dead and dying foliage can harbor insects which will lay eggs for next year. Gardens really do have to be weeded and cleaned out in the fall. You'll be able to hit the ground running when it's time to plant next year.

I'm often asked what the busiest time of year is for me. Many people mistakenly think it's the summer. Nope. It's spring and then fall.



I guess we bring some of this hustle and bustle upon ourselves. Fall is the time when we personally review each and every lawn we have under contract. We like to see what progress the lawn has made during the growing season. Since fall is the best time to renovate a lawn, we can suggest adjustments like aeration and overseeding at this time of year. There's more information about fall lawn care in my article on the reverse side.

*This is a photo of a stone retaining wall that we installed this summer.*

There are lots of other projects that need attention in the fall also. Fall tick repellent sprays have to be completed. You need to have your property treated once in the spring and once in the fall to provide full protection for you and your family from ticks. Remember, my tick repellent service guarantees that you won't find a tick on you if you treat your property twice a year. If you do, I'll return and retreat the problem area at no charge.

Here's another type of fall project. Deer become even more of a nuisance on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in the autumn. Mating season is generally from September through November for adult deer. Adult deer can cause considerable damage to your landscaping. We offer a natural/organic deer repellent program which ensures deer avoid your property.

Deer learn to avoid those plants and soon wander off in search of other foraging grounds. There's absolutely no possibility of harm to deer or any other wildlife. For a great source of information about deer, check out the Wildlife Rescue League website at: <http://www.wildliferescueleague.org/node/44>

Other fall tasks include landscape plantings, installing spring flowering bulbs and preparing beds for the winter. Like I said earlier, we're so busy in the fall that it's hard to keep up. Makes me weary, just writing about it!

Melissa and I rewarded ourselves with two weeks at the beach this year. We just love our little trailer on the Bayside in Ocean City. I fish and cook. Melissa loves shopping and riding her three wheeler. We wanted more time away this summer, but the boss wouldn't let us. Maybe he'll be lenient next year.

## Natural/Organic Lawn Care

Fall means one thing around our company. It's grass growing time!

Actually, autumn means a lot of things to me, but more on this later. The main thrust of our efforts is concentrated on natural/organic lawn care at this time of year. Cooler weather is the very best time to invest in a beautiful lush lawn.

In fact, I rarely overseed in the spring. VERY rarely. Grass seed needs warm weather to germinate. Soil temperatures are generally still warm in the fall. Then, young grass grows best in continued cooler weather.

In the fall, grass will continue to develop for 2-3 months before cold weather sets in and it becomes dormant. Then, next spring, young plants will continue to grow before the summer heat begins.

Another reason we install grass seed in the fall is because rain and moisture levels are generally better in the fall. I use a blend of three different grass seeds, which work well here in the mid-Atlantic region.

We complete a lot of steps to ensure that our grass seed germinates. One of the best and most important of our basic cultural practices is aeration.

Aeration is the process of perforating the soil with small holes. We often complete core aeration which removes "plugs" of soil and deposits them on the surface. These "plugs" generally biodegrade in a week or two and return to the soil.

This process allows air, water and fertilizer to penetrate the lawn's surface and get to the grass' roots. This enables the seed to grow more vigorously.

Aeration also improves soil compaction. Compaction may cause poor drainage which will adversely affect grass growth. Additionally, aeration reduces the possibility of thatch becoming an issue.



Bill aerates with our small tractor and an attachment. He is using bags of fertilizer for weight in the back, so he can punch holes even deeper into the ground.

There are other steps I may suggest. Very often, we start with a soil test.

This allows us to understand the current conditions of your soil. Once the lab has analyzed the pH levels of your soil, I can make recommendations on how to improve it.

I may suggest extra compost for the lawn. Your grass may need lime or sulfur. A soil test is the best way for me to understand what's going on below the surface of your grass.

All lawn evaluations are free. Our 80% natural and organic program has a proven track record in this area for the past ten years. And, we offer our program for about the same cost as a traditional chemically based program.

I'm committed to preserving the health of the Chesapeake Bay and all the waterways in Maryland. I can actually help the environment by reducing the amount of nitrogen based fertilizer I use in my lawn care program.

Consider allowing me to explain my program and how I may be able to help you achieve a lush green lawn...organically.

### Just a Reminder...

If we provide your lawn care services, we'll be in touch with you over the next month or so to review your lawn. It's been a very tough summer for grass. The drought has hurt everyone's lawn. So, we'll be contacting you soon. My manager, Dave Lee, or I will personally visit your property to see what's happening with your lawn.

On another note, we'll also be contacting all of our tick repellent clients again this fall. We'll need to complete your fall spray so that we can keep your family safe from ticks all year.

You need to be sprayed in the fall to kill adult ticks. You don't want them to lay eggs before the end of their life cycle. You'll have the same tick problems next spring, if we don't take steps this autumn.