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## **NEWLY SEEDED LAWN**

Grass seed needs moisture, suitable temperature and air to germinate. The seed absorbs water and if other conditions are suitable, the cells of the embryo become active. Of these three conditions, improper watering probably causes more failures in a newly seeded lawn than any other factor. Seeded grasses are also susceptible to attack by a wide variety of fungi. The grasses may fail to appear above the ground due to “damping off”, seed rot or drying just after emergence.

Post seeding care, especially watering, is the single, most important factor in deciding the success or failure of a seeded lawn. The trick is to water enough to keep the soil moist, but not so much the soil washes away. This delicate nurturing period extends between the time the seed is sown, and the point when the grass becomes established.

To insure even germination, the very top layer of soil (always the first to dry out), must stay constantly moist. A thorough soaking is required after sowing, but not to the point of run-off, and then as many as three to four light sprinklings per day. More frequent watering will be required if it is hot and windy. Water with a fine spray, this will minimize moving soil or washing seed away. Avoid standing water. Do not apply water faster than it can be taken in by the soil.

Once seeds have begun to germinate, they must not dry out, or they will die. Avoid saturating or flooding the soil, as excessive moisture is favorable for the development of fungus diseases. Keep the newly seeded areas continually moist with light and frequent applications of water until the grass is established (1-2” high). Then taper off your watering. As the new turf becomes partially developed, irrigation should be less frequent, but more intensive. Remember, no grass seed will germinate unless it is kept continually moist. Seed invariably germinates more slowly in the cool temperatures of early spring and late fall, so be patient at this time of the year.

When watering your lawn, please note that the common lawns bordering your proper should be water as well. This will ensure that the entire community becomes more attractive and enjoyable more quickly.

Established lawns should not be watered until they show signs of wilting or going off color. Then water the soil about once a week, depending on weather conditions. The soil should be damp to a depth of 6” to 8”.