

NOW IS THE TIME TO REPAIR YOUR LAWN.

Prepare now for next year's successful growth - with experienced local help from Soil Service

ABIOTIC STRESS: WHEN THE ENVIRONMENT IS THE PROBLEM	COMMON SIGNS
Abiotic stress is plant damage caused by nonliving conditions rather than insects or disease. Kansas City's prolonged heat, limited rainfall, compacted soil, poor drainage and excessive water can all place a lawn under abiotic stress. Tall fescue and Kentucky bluegrass are cool-season grasses that store energy in their roots and use it to survive hot summer weather. As heat continues, root growth slows, root mass may shrink and stored energy can become depleted. The lawn then has less ability to absorb water and nutrients, which may lead to thinning, wilting, discoloration or dead areas by late summer. This damage is not necessarily anyone's fault; even well-maintained lawns can struggle during severe weather.	Look for widespread wilting, bluish-gray or straw-colored grass, footprints that remain visible, thinning near pavement, and damage that follows sunny, compacted, dry or poorly drained areas. Patterns tied to the site or weather often point toward abiotic stress.

REPAIR NOW FOR NEXT YEAR'S SUCCESSFUL GROWTH

Fall gives cool-season grass its best opportunity to rebuild roots and establish new seedlings before the next Kansas City summer. Work completed now helps the lawn store energy, fill thin areas and enter next year with stronger roots. We cannot control next summer's weather, but we can prepare the lawn to face it successfully.

THE FALL SEEDING PLAN

1	Measure, observe and take photos Measure the lawn area and note where thinning occurs. Take clear photos of the overall lawn and close-ups of damaged areas. Soil Service can review them with you and help identify patterns tied to heat, water, drainage or compaction.
2	Prepare the surface Remove debris and loosen the top 1/2-1 inch. Core-aerate if needed, especially in compacted areas where water runs off or roots struggle to grow.
3	Choose quality seed Match the seed to the site. KC Endurance, KC Marathon, Superblue and Shady Lawn are blended for different conditions because, inconveniently, not every patch of dirt has the same personality.
4	Spread evenly Apply half the seed in one direction and the other half across it. Good seed-to-soil contact improves germination; seed resting on hard soil mostly becomes a generous buffet for birds.
5	Keep it moist Keep the seedbed consistently moist during germination with light, frequent watering. As seedlings mature, gradually shift toward deeper and less frequent watering.
6	Mow carefully Mow when new grass reaches around 3 inches. Use a sharp blade and remove no more than one-third of the height at once. The lawn needs a haircut, not a military induction.

IMPORTANT

Do not use a crabgrass preventer where you plan to seed unless the product label specifically allows it. Most preemergents can prevent desirable grass seed from germinating along with crabgrass.

A SIMPLE FERTILIZATION SCHEDULE

Cool-season grass benefits most from fertilizer while it is actively growing. More is not better: applying too much can increase mowing, disease pressure and stress. Measure the lawn, calibrate the spreader and follow the product label.

WHEN	THE IDEA	WHAT YOU SHOULD ACTUALLY DO
Late April If irrigating	Light feeding	An established, irrigated lawn may receive a scheduled feeding. Avoid encouraging lush growth if the lawn will not receive adequate water as summer approaches.
May	Use restraint	Avoid heavy nitrogen applications before summer. Excessive growth can require more water and may increase disease pressure.
June-August	No fertilization	Do not fertilize during Kansas City summer heat. Focus on early-morning watering, taller mowing and reducing traffic on stressed areas. Diagnose brown areas before choosing any treatment.
September	Seed and establish	Seed or overseed and apply Ferti-lome New Lawn Starter according to the label. About 2-4 weeks after germination, use Ferti-lome Lawn Food + Iron rather than repeating starter fertilizer.
Late Oct.-early Nov.	Build reserves	When top growth slows but the grass remains green, apply the final winterizer feeding. This supports root energy storage before winter and the following summer.

KEEP A SIMPLE LAWN-CARE RECORD

RECORD	Write down the date, product, lawn area, spreader setting and weather. A simple record prevents accidental repeat applications and makes future troubleshooting easier.
MEASURE	Purchase and apply product for the actual lawn area. Guessing tends to create either weak coverage or an unnecessarily enthusiastic application.
ADJUST	Delay fertilizer during heat, drought, saturated soil or before heavy rain. The calendar is a guide; current lawn and weather conditions should lead the decision.
REVIEW	Compare photos and notes through the season. Adjust mowing, watering and future applications when repeated stress patterns become clear.

CALL SOIL SERVICE OR SHARE PHOTOS OF YOUR LAWN.

Soil Service has extensive experience handling lawn-care calls and reviewing photos from customers throughout the KC Metro and surrounding areas. Our team understands the local patterns created by heat, drought, clay soil, drainage and summer stress. We can help distinguish abiotic stress from insects or disease, review what you are seeing and guide the next practical step. Now is the time to repair your lawn for next year's successful growth.

When contacting Soil Service, include wide views, close-ups, the affected location and any recent watering or product information. Always follow product labels and adjust care for actual lawn and weather conditions.