



## Brown Spots Need More Than Water

Many people are experiencing brown or straw coloring on their lawns. During the height of summer, this is not unusual. However, many people attempt to correct the problem by increasing the amount of water they apply. This may lead to wasting water without receiving benefits.

In some cases, improper or infrequent fertilization may be the culprit. In the Rocky Mountain region, most lawns are comprised of cool-season grasses. For cool-season grasses (Kentucky bluegrasses, fescues), it's best to aerate and fertilize the lawn before the grass gets going in April. If you choose to fertilize only once, feed in the fall - if twice, then in spring and fall. If you desire a green lawn from spring to fall, then fertilize four times per year, early spring, late spring, late summer and mid-fall.

Another common problem is the manner in which water is being delivered to your lawn. You may be missing spots. You may be watering during the day when much of the water is evaporated. To conserve water and water most efficiently, water uniformly, deeply and infrequently in the early morning or evening hours. You may verify watering uniformity by utilizing 4 to 6 flat-bottomed, straight-sided cans as gauges with a ruler and a watch. Arrange the gauges at random distances away from any sprinkler, but all within the area you assume is being covered. Run the sprinkler for a specific time (pop-up spray heads 15 minutes, rotors – 30 minutes). Then measure the amount of water in each can, checking for uniformity. Some variation is expected, but a difference of 10 percent or more between any two gauges must be addressed by adjusting your sprinkler coverage, or repairing the sprinkler heads.

Other problems may require the assistance of a professional. The Rocky Mountain Sod Growers Association is comprised of experts who use science and experience to provide quality advice concerning sod installation, lawn care and water conservation.

For more information, please contact one of our members.