

garden

By Roger Myers

Roger Myers is the President and Founder of American Beauty Landscaping. Established in 1979, ABL is the Valley's industry leader with more than 100 national, state and local awards to its landscape design and build credit.



Fall For Your Lawn & Garden



Fall is approaching, the leaves and the footballs are in the air; pumpkins, hay bales, witches, and trick-or-treaters soon to follow. It has been a great summer for picnics, swimming, golfing, and all things fun! However, the rains were sparse, and came only in down-pours. Growing grass, and healthy abundant annuals was quite the challenge. Daily watering even twice daily was the order of the day, those with irrigation systems were glad they had them; however the soaking rains of mother-nature cannot be matched by artificial means!

Natural rain water has different ionic charges than does tap water, or well water; you will notice that there just isn't anything as good as the real thing for plant growth!

As a result, many of us are anxious to remove the faded or failed annuals such as petunias, or impatiens, and prepare our beds with new life in Mums, Asters, Kale, or cabbage. Now is the time to plan and plant your Spring bulbs, best installed after the first frost.

Many lawns show severe drought stress after a lack of June and July thunderstorms. August and September have brought little relief, thus many lawns remain brown, while homeowners are still in denial!

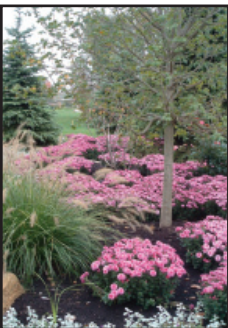
Now is the best time to repair damaged lawns, or continue to improve on satisfactory turf.

HOW TO REPAIR YOUR LAWN

Fall is best for over-seeding weak areas or bare-spots; the usually steady frequent fall rains will help your new seed grow quickly! Also the soil is still quite warm, and helps to germinate the new seed. The best advice I can give to lawn enthusiasts is to core-airify your turf once the rains soften the soil. Be sure to leave the plugs on the surface, and promptly fertilize the newly cored sod. The openings allow deeper penetration of the fertilizer pellets – to the root zone, the cores open the turf to allow the increased interchange of soil, water and food, and stimulate roots' uptake. The bottom line is your lawn will thrive and thank you for it!



If you have troublesome thatch (over 1" thick) it must be removed, and replaced with a new turf. The core airifying only aides in the decomposition of the thatch layer (if less than 1") which will help your lawns' performance immensely. If you are not sure what to do – call an expert; now is the best time to repair the damage. It's much more difficult to do in the spring; and results are not as satisfying.



Fall is for mums. But don't forget other great long lasting annuals such as pansies, asters, colorful cabbage and kale. These tough plants will last to way beyond the first frost, and survive many early snows.

For the money, you can't get a more long lasting plant, or more color. Try the new larger varieties of cabbage and kale. They are quite impressive as well as dependable even as late as Christmas! Mums planted early, September to mid October, have a much better chance to get established and return to your garden next year. However, if you will be changing them out; anytime is a good time to plant mums. --
Happy Halloween! Roger A. Myers, CEO, American Beauty Landscaping.