



SEPTEMBER TIP SAVINGS: \$150-\$300/YR

Avoided Emissions of CO₂: Up to 220 lbs./YR

\$USTAINABILITY \$AVINGS TIP

WINTER RYEGRASS: TO OVERSEED OR NOT TO OVERSEED

Let Us Help With Our Top Ten Reasons Not to Plant a Winter Lawn

While sustaining a lush, green lawn throughout the year is appealing to many home and business owners, the additional water needed for cool-season grasses is difficult to justify when water is such a precious resource. Now more than ever, saving every drop we can is critical as we experience exceptional drought conditions as well as climate pressures that may trigger water shortages to our Colorado River water supplies.

By learning to accept a less-than-lush lawn during the winter months, property owners will not only help protect Arizona's water supplies, but will also realize significant time savings, and best of all... dollar savings! If you're looking for even more good reasons, see our **Top Ten** list below:

Save 8,000 gallons a year for every 1,000 sq. ft. of grass by not overseeding.

- 10. SAVE TIME** – No need to scalp the lawn, prepare the seed bed, seed, water, or mow.
- 9. SAVE WATER** – Getting ryegrass seed to germinate requires watering three times a day or more. Once established, ryegrass needs water every 3-7 days. Dormant bermudagrass needs water only once every 3-4 weeks.
- 8. PRESERVE WATER QUALITY** – Less fertilizers and pesticides will be needed. Much of our water pollution comes from runoff of these products from urban landscapes.
- 7. SAVE MONEY** – The cost of seed, labor, water and gasoline for mowing. Also, wastewater rates are often determined by your winter water usage. If you use more water in the winter, your utility bill wastewater rates will be higher the rest of the year.
- 6. SAVE LANDFILL SPACE** – Scalping bermudagrass creates a great deal of waste for the landfills. Ryegrass clippings can create additional waste all winter and spring.
- 5. SAVE THE AIR** – Gasoline mowers and other lawn equipment contribute to our air pollution problems, and the scalping process releases dust and other particles into the air. Cough! Cough! Wheeze... anyone up for a little yard work?
- 4. DECREASE NOISE POLLUTION** – The drone of lawn equipment has become a major source of background noise in many neighborhoods, contributing to an already noisy world.
- 3. SAVE FRUSTRATION** – Problems with seed germination, fertilizers, diseases, and irrigation are all common when planting a winter lawn.
- 2. SET AN EXAMPLE** – We live in a desert and this is an opportunity to demonstrate your community leadership with a responsible outlook towards our water supplies. Plus, there are no federal, state or city laws requiring winter lawns (but there are a few HOA requirements out there).

...and the number one reason not to plant a winter lawn...

- 1. GIVE YOUR BERMUDAGRASS A BREAK** – Overseeding can be stressful for your bermudagrass. Scalping it in the fall before dormancy doesn't allow for adequate storage of energy to the roots. In the spring, the rye competes with bermudagrass, and the common practice of withholding water to transition from winter to summer grass will also cause stress.

CHECKLIST FOR SAVINGS

- Call (480) 644-3306 for literature on how to maintain grass properly, for free watering guides or for information on our \$500 Grass-to-Xeriscape incentive program.

\$START \$AVING

Start saving on your water bill while doing your part for *building a sustainable community*. Visit our website for more sustainability savings tips at mesaaz.gov/sustainability.

Learn to live Green