

Village of Willowbrook

2016-2017 Lawn Care



PURE PRAIRIE ORGANICS

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For 22 years I have been taking care of lawns in this area. Most of those years I have owned my own business so I've had the pleasure of not only knowing the feeling of making lawns look nice and making sure my customers are happy, but also about the products we use and what it does to Mother Nature. From classes like Ornamental Horticulture to Business and Marketing my experience has been diverse dealing with the many sides that are involved in making our lawns look beautiful.

I have also learned a lot about the soil and types of grass growing and how to best take care of it with fewer or no chemicals/pesticides... this is why most of our customers find me and want to use our service. The trick is getting the soil fixed, back to being healthy, and full of good microorganisms. Microorganisms get the salt flushed out and make the soil softer so the roots grow deeper, and therefore, the lawn will become more capable of finding water on its own. Also, microorganisms make the soil a habitable place for certain beneficial insects that help produce nutrients for the grass and help aerate the soil season after season.

I started off doing chemical lawn care because that was all I knew and there wasn't such a demand for organic/natural lawn care. I learned as I went along and spent time reading about different methods and researching what happens in the soil when we use less chemical products and pesticides and more organic stuff and natural methods. There is A LOT of stuff that is supposed to happen in the soil and the more and more harmful methods are used the worse off the soil gets and the more we'll need to rely on chemicals and pesticides to make the grass look nice.

When chemical fertilizers and weed control are used season after season and year after year it adds salt to the soil. This is the Salt Index or SI of the soil. When the SI of the soil gets too high it's difficult for insects to live there and the populations of worms and other beneficial insects greatly diminishes. Worms and certain insects are beneficial and vital to a healthy soil. Certain insects like pill bugs, roly pollies or doodle bugs decompose organic matter in the soil turning it into a natural and free nutrient for the grass to use. Earthworms make thousands of tunnels in the soil naturally aerating it allowing water and air to enter deeper into the soil making it a healthy and earthy soil. Earth worm diets also contribute natural nutrients for the grass to use.

When picking an insect control it's important to choose one that can specifically target the insect you want to kill and not EVERY insect in the soil.

We want to improve the soil season after season and year after year so we can move in the direction of less chemical fertilizers and less pesticides; we'll create a healthier environment for everyone in and around the Village of Willowbrook.

Organic Based Blended Program & Organic/Natural Program

1. Organic Based Blended Program:

Mixture of 5 visits for Parks, and 3 visits for Roadside Rights of Way, Medians, and Specified Facilities.

Park

Midway Park (2.1 acres)

Creekside Park (5.1 acres)

Lake Hinsdale Park (1.0 acres)

Ridgemoor Park (5.4 acres)

Waterford Park (4.3 acres)

Farmingdale Terrace Park (3.0 acres)

Willow Pond (3.0 acres)

Prairie Trail Park (5.0 acres)

Rogers Glen Park (1.5 acres)

Public Works Facility (2.0 acres)

****TOTAL: 32.4 acres**

Roadside Rights of Way, Medians, and Specified Facilities

Medians areas and road side rights of way on Route 83 from approximately the 5900 block of Route 83 to Route 83 south 79th St., including the bermed area at Midway Drive, (south of Midway Drive). (24.67 acres)

73rd Ct. Pump house site (3.37 acres)

Village Hall (.30 acres)

****TOTAL: 28.34 acres**

2. Organic/Natural Program:

5 visits in the early spring, late spring, early summer, late summer, and fall

Park

Borse Memorial Community Park (8.8 acres)

****TOTAL: 8.8 acres**

****Proposed Cost: \$19,074.00 (Current TrueGreen Rate: \$19,970)**

Organic Based Blended Program

Parks: will be on our 5 visit program (Early Spring, Late Spring, Early Summer, Late summer, and Fall)

1st "Early in Season"- We typically start when the snow goes away and things start warming up... some years it's mid March and some years it has been mid April based on the weather.

Organic Based Blended Program will start off with:

17-0-2 Fertilizer. Granular Product

With Prodiamine (Crab Grass Control) also a granular product

Applied by Perma Green (Spreader/Sprayer Machine)

Organic/Natural Program will start off with:

Blend of liquid Compost Tea

Liquid blend of Kelp with Humic Acids, Fulvic Acids and Amino Acids

Applied by Perma Green (Spreader/Sprayer Machine)--

2nd-5th- Our applications will be spaced apart about 5-6 weeks

Organic Based Blended Program for most parks will continue with:

Kelp (12-0-6), Compost Tea and Weed Control Mixture. Liquid Product

*Triplet SF, common liquid weed control will be used throughout the year (spot treatment)

Applied by Perma Green (Spreader/Sprayer Machine)

Roadside Rights of Way, Medians, and Specified Facilities: will be on our 3 visit program (Spring, Summer and Fall)

1st-3th- Our visits will be timed with Mother Nature (rain and temperature) and when the weeds are most effectively controlled.

Organic Based Blended Program for Roadside Rights of Way, Medians, and Specified Facilities

Kelp (12-0-6), Compost Tea and Weed Control Mixture. Liquid Product

*Triplet SF, common liquid weed control will be used throughout the year (spot treatment)

Applied by Perma Green (Spreader/Sprayer Machine and 200 gallon Lesco spray tanks and 300 ft hose sprayer)

Organic/Natural Program

Borse Memorial Community Park: will be on our 5 visit program (Early Spring, Late Spring, Early Summer, Late summer, and Fall)

We typically start when the snow goes away and things start warming up... some years it's mid March and some years it has been mid April based on the weather.

Our applications will be spaced apart about 5-6 weeks

*Each visit of our **Organic/Natural Program** will include:*

Blend of liquid Compost Tea

Liquid blend of Kelp with Humic Acids, Fulvic Acids and Amino Acids

Applied by Perma Green (Spreader/Sprayer Machine)

Why Compost Tea? Compost Tea contains microscopic organisms that will live in the soil. They help decompose stuff in the soil... lots of stuff. They recycle nutrients in the soil, build soil structure and organic matter and work synergistically with the roots of the grass. They also hold nutrients in the soil and then release them when needed. Many times existing soil lacks these microscopic organisms because of damaging chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Why Kelp and all the organic acids? They aid the grass during the growing and bloom stages and promotes photosynthesis. It's how we focus on soil and plant health instead of just making grass look nice. It's a nice gentle organic mixture that helps make the grass healthy and the soil earthy... similar to the ground in a forest.

Additional Information about Organic/Natural Lawn Care

Our mixture is a natural composition of compost tea, organic acids, amino acids, fulvic acids, humic acids and kelp. This aids in soil composition and health, increasing microbial activity in the soil. Microbes consist of a variety of beneficial fungi and bacteria within the soil. Their balanced microbial activity breaks down organic and non-organic matter in the soil, to which their by-product acts as a natural nutrient. Mycorrhizal fungi aids in root health and development. They grow/live one step ahead of the root system. They create an environment for the roots to thrive and grow well.

Healthy, microbial activity increases the soil's natural ability to ward off undesirable pests such as grubs. One of the ideas behind organic/natural lawn care is to create a deep and extensive root system so that when and if grubs are present and they start feeding on and near the root system it is healthy enough to withstand some insect activity... similar to someone being very healthy with a strong immune system and being around someone that may be sick. If someone is healthy and has a strong immune system they may not get the "bug" that the other person has. That does not mean it can't be damaged by grubs... but it's less likely to be damaged similar to someone less likely to get sick from a "bug" carried by some close to them.

Another idea behind organic/natural lawn care is to make the cell wall thicker than the typical chemically fed grass or trees/shrubs. If a cell wall (skin) is healthy and thick and certain insects (sod webworms in the lawn or Japanese Beetles in trees/shrubs) come to feed and they are trying to eat the grass blades or leaves of a tree/shrub but they are a bit thicker and crunchier they may go elsewhere to feed on a weaker food source. They'll be like "the heck with this... let's go someplace else". Similar to a person wanting a snack and picking a tasty salty easy to eat potato chip that's of no benefit to their body/health instead of a healthy homemade crunchy quinoa cracker full of good stuff.

Many times I relate the soil to our own bodies the importance of living a healthy lifestyle instead of just eating junk food and drinking energy drinks. If we take care of our bodies, eat well and sleep enough we are typically healthy overall... if we eat junk food, don't sleep a lot and are around people that are sick we may get sick too and feel run down. It's a very easy comparison to make and helps relate to organic/natural lawn care in a basic way. There are many complex things that go on in the soil and many factors that help create beautiful grass... but the stuff we use are a very important piece of the puzzle.

We have some lawns that we don't use pesticides in or on and when we visit these lawns for our next application we see few or no weeds there in the lawn... this is one of the ultimate goals of organic/natural lawn care. They just don't grow much in healthy thick lawns. This will be our long term goal for the areas within the Village if we are the ones servicing the grass. It does not just happen right away but in contrast the soil did not get damaged right away... it took years to damage and make it sterile so why not start now to improve, go green and use less pesticides?

Since the Village has been using chemical lawn care, it will take steps to go all organic or natural... but I do not think that you need to be at that point immediately. Most of our customers start with our Organic Based Blended Program which includes some organic fertilizers, some traditional fertilizers, some crabgrass control and some weed control. These are steps in going green and in making sure the grass still looks nice while improving the health of the grass, soil, and environment. Some clients then switch the second year to our Organic/Natural Program in the back yard (where the kids and pets may be most of the time) and the Organic Based Blended Program in front (where they want to look nicer for the neighbors) ... just another step and way we can be flexible and give our customers what they want. Then maybe the following year switch to our Organic/Natural Program in front and back.

On a larger scale you can have us do the Organic Based Blended Program in most of the areas and focus on one park (such as the Borse Memorial Community Park) using our Organic/Natural Program. If at any time you want to add weed control to the program at the Borse Memorial Community Park just let us know and we can add weed control so some or all of that park.

