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Spring Snow Showers bring May... a Mess!

By Chris Vasecka

So our hopes of an early spring arrival were dashed by a spring blizzard. For those of you south of Monticello, just a mix of snow and ice, for the rest of us a foot of snow. For a moment we were questioning Global Warming, and then the bright sun and 60-70 degree temps wiped out the snow in just a couple of days, leaving behind the sod that the plow truck turned over. So let's get started, our night time temps are beginning to regulate and our soil temps are getting close to 50 degrees. If you have not put down your pre emergent grass herbicide, you need to have it down before May 15th, after that it is for the most part a wasted application that will only add to chemicals being tossed down our storm sewers. New grass should be sprouting from areas that received damage over the winter. Although fertilizer will promote the growth of these new plants, until soil temps are above 50 degrees, most of the nitrogen will not be available for the plant to uptake. We should be hitting these temps about midway through the month of May. For those bare areas, you can begin to plant them at any time. It is recommended to use a mulch or cellulosic product with the seed to help retain moisture for the new seeds and eventually the new seedlings. Many seed manufacturers now include these

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products premixed with the seed. You can also purchase a seed blanket, which is a wood or paper fiber meshed into a nylon netting. This will not only hold moisture, but will promote heat and encourage earlier germination. These new areas need to be watched carefully, so that they do not dry out, especially when the new seedlings are beginning to sprout. Once the grass tillers, put off secondary leaf blades, you will be able to start to back off on the amount of water it needs. Good luck with your lawn, and hopefully we will have weather that is a little more cooperative.

Box Stores or Nurseries????

Both places provide pretty much the same things, except for price and expertise. We shop both. If you are comfortable with planting shrubs and have a lot of experience doing so, or have hired someone with experience to do the planting for you, the box store offers a great variety of plants and shrubs. If you are new to planting, or if you want to plant something that you have not worked with before, then you need to visit your local nursery. Most people comment that the plants from the nursery always grow better than the plants from the Big Box Store. Some of that is true. But the truth actually

comes from the knowledge we receive from the nursery. These people are highly skilled in their line of work and are prepared and have the time to answer our questions. We pay a little more for the plants, but receive so much more. As for the big box store the expertise lies in the value of the savings. When planting new plants consider the value you are adding to your home and you decide where you should buy.

“if you want to plant something that you have not worked with before, than you need to visit your local nursery”

What is an Irrigation Output Audit?

When you hear the word Audit, the words of the IRS shiver down our back. That is a bad thing isn't it?? If you are hiding something from the IRS, than it is a bad thing. When it comes to your irrigation system it is something much different.

It all started the day you looked outside and decided, today I will no longer use a hose. You opened up the phone book to come to borage of irrigation companies all waiting for that phone call from. Each of them carrying their credentials of past experience. Most of whom are extremely good and efficient at what they do. The bids come in, experience vs. price, a little negotiation and next you have pipes in the ground and now own a highly sophisticated irrigation system with

over 100 years of engineering and electronics at the touch of your finger tips. But wait, they forgot to leave the manual on how long and when or when not to water. To our disappointment there was none. We were told that through trial and error we will figure it out.

No more need for trial and error, we can now order an audit and find out exactly how our system performs and make it the most efficient operating machine it can be. An audit includes water out put analysis, soil conditions, and shade quality and zip code climate info. With all of these pieces of information a new program is created that will create a solid base for your irrigation system. Now you have the manual that they forgot to leave. Happy Watering.

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