



BUCKEYE ECOCARE®

Family Owned Since 1984



We always look forward to this time of year; the cool air and the changing colors are a great contrast to summer, and this time of year is a great refresher for your lawn and landscape. While summer is great, it can be unpredictable. Excessive heat coupled with too much or too little moisture can wreak havoc on your green investment. Cooler autumn weather gives your lawn an opportunity to rest up and rejuvenate before winter.

However, the fun isn't over yet! Those cooler temperatures make fall a great time to improve your lawn with core aeration. Depending on the weather, you may still be able to put down seed for an even thicker lawn next spring. Fall is also one of the most beneficial times to fertilize your lawn, as well as your trees and shrubs. Fall fertilization will pay huge dividends in the spring.

Autumn also gives us an opportunity to look back on the growing season with gratitude for you, our clients and neighbors. We love the work we do, and we hope you enjoy the results, but none of it would be possible without you. We truly appreciate the opportunity to work with you this year, making your corner of our community a little greener.

LAWN CARE FOR THE DOG DAYS

When you envision this time of year, it most likely includes sunshine, slightly cooler weather, and green lawns full of thick, healthy grass. While this is a nice image, early fall can be an extremely challenging time for your lawn.

How you handle watering, mowing, and fertilizing your lawn makes a huge difference when it comes to how well your lawn will contend with the warm, drier weather.

Watering your lawn correctly is incredibly important. When irrigating your lawn, be sure to give it extended periods of slow and steady soaking. This allows water to infiltrate the soil's surface and reach the root zone, where it can be fully absorbed.

Lawns that go extended periods of time without water defend themselves by going dormant. This shutting down turns lawns brown but keeps them from dying off. Once watered, lawns will green up and resume their normal growth cycle. Although it is meant to help lawns survive harsh conditions, the process of going in and out of dormancy is taxing. It is therefore important to maintain a consistent watering routine to prevent drought-induced dormancy.

When the sun is intense, your lawn appreciates any shade it can find. By mowing your lawn on the high side (at least 3 inches), you are able to block a large amount of sunlight and make your lawn a more comfortable place for your turf. Along with mowing high, mulching your clippings (as opposed to bagging them) can help your watering efforts. Clippings that are left to lie help absorb water and deliver it to your turf. As always, it's especially important to keep your mower blades sharp so as to prevent shredded grass blades.

Finally, fertilization calls for a careful approach. Overfertilization can actually damage your lawn if top growth is overextended. Without a robust root system in place to support rapid blade growth, turf plants can become stressed and even die off. The use of slow-release and organic fertilizers can limit this risk. All lawns and climates are different, however, so when considering lawn fertilization, it's important to follow the guidance of a lawn care professional.

Now is a time when we expect the most from our lawns. It's also a time when turfgrass struggles with limited rain and September heat. With mindful mowing, watering, and fertilization, you can give your lawn the care it needs to look its best.



DISCOURAGE MENACING MOSQUITOES

Nothing ruins the mood of a nice evening like the unrelenting attack of annoying mosquitoes. Like humans, these blood-suckers lay low during the hottest parts of the day but love to come out when the sun's heat starts to subside. Here are a few tips to keep mosquitoes to a minimum:

REPELLANT PLANTS: When mosquitoes are on the prowl, their keen sense of smell lets them lock in on carbon dioxide that we breathe out. This lets them know that a possible food source is close by. Plants with a strong scent, like lavender, rosemary, or marigolds, can confuse mosquitoes' sense of smell and minimize their presence.

DISRUPT THE CYCLE: The best way to get rid of mosquitoes is to reduce their numbers by disrupting their life cycle. Mosquitoes reproduce quickly and in large numbers if given the opportunity. Standing water offers the ideal setting for mosquitoes to multiply, so removing standing water is the best way to halt their progress. Water cans, bird baths, kids' toys, and flower pots all collect rainwater and become mosquito breeding grounds. Removing these items and keeping containers turned upside down can greatly limit the amount of mosquitoes you need to deal with.

Mosquitoes are an uncomfortable and annoying part of enjoying your outdoor space. By filling your plant beds with fragrant vegetation and eliminating standing water, you can take a bite out of those who would bite you!



THE COOLING EFFECTS OF VEGETATION

Shrubs, trees, flowers, and turf all make any area more lively and attractive. They also work as a kind of natural air conditioner that cools the air both outdoors and inside your home.

In an outdoor setting, trees cool the area around them by offering shade. When strategically placed, trees can block an immense amount of sunlight. This can help cool your home in a residential setting, as well as parking lots, office complexes and playgrounds in a public setting. This natural shade drastically increases an area's comfort while reducing the amount of energy needed for air conditioning.

A more subtle way that plants cool their surrounding area is through the process of transpiration. You may remember when we described how the process of transpiration purifies water in a previous newsletter. This same function allows plants to cool the air around them. When plants transpire, they excrete tiny droplets of water that quickly evaporate. When water evaporates, it draws heat energy from its surroundings. Hot, dry air is converted to cooler, more humid air.

Like photosynthesis (which creates oxygen), transpiration is necessary to plants and beneficial for their surroundings. Whether around your patio or in your house, plants are constantly making their surroundings a better place.



HELP US BE BETTER!

Sometimes, even the best leaders need to be reminded of why we do what we do every day. At Buckeye EcoCare, service is always in season, but we need to constantly be reminded of our company's Vision and Mission. Merely having a sign on the wall does not always result in the best possible experience for every client's service visit.



**BUCKEYE
ECOCARE®**

Vision and Mission

Vision – Make every customer service experience personal!

Mission – To earn the highest quality reputation in the Green Industry while creating customers for life.

We start all our leadership meetings with one of our team members reciting our Vision and Mission statement, but the best test for any service organization is to measure client loyalty. To help evaluate our successes and failures, we will be sending out a brief client e-survey over the next few months. If you receive our short, ten-question digital survey, we encourage you to be open and honest with your responses, which will help us become better at delivering the level of service that you deserve.



Tom R. Grunkemeyer
President, Buckeye EcoCare

When my father Mark invited me into the family business nearly 20 years ago, he encouraged me to remember the three secrets to operating any service business:

- 1) Ask your customers exactly what they expect from you and write it down.
- 2) Give it to them on time and at a fair price.
- 3) Fess up when you mess up.

As I look back on the last 17 years at Buckeye EcoCare, all I can remember is the third secret. For the most part, computers take care of the first two. However, when we make mistakes – and we do, every day – the buck usually stops on my desk. Please take the time to answer our e-survey in the near future so we can make the pile of notes on my desk a little smaller next year. Thank you!

Tom Grunkemeyer
President, Buckeye EcoCare

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A RECENT COMMENT FROM A SATISFIED CUSTOMER:

"Can I brag on your great service person, Bruce? We just had our first pest control treatment today, and our stubborn ten-month-old puppy got out before he treated. Bruce patiently helped my hubby corral her and get her safe. It took a while - we are senior citizens and don't chase puppies very well. Bruce is a fantastic employee. Please extend our thanks!"

We couldn't agree more about Bruce. Thank YOU, Carolyn!