



Celebrating 22 Years!

# ask the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

## Welcome to my weekly series!

Feel free to send me questions you'd like to have me answer and I will do my best to address the ones of most general interest.

EMAIL OR MAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO:  
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Give us a call if we can be of service!

### QUESTION THIS WEEK:

*Hi Linda, I have heard that Sprigs & Twigs has an Organic Lawn Care Program and I'd like to know more about it. My husband puts down bags of stuff on our lawn and I'm worried he's doing something harmful. Thank you ...Kathy*

### Linda's Answer:

Hello Kathy- you ask an extremely important question. **This is Part 2 of my answer to your question.** Sprigs & Twigs offers the only legitimate, 100% Organic Lawn Care Program in the area; we would be happy to visit with you and explain it in more detail. While it is fashionable for other companies to claim they do "organic" lawn care, they almost always include synthetic chemicals.

Let's take a closer look at the drawbacks of synthetic chemical lawn care programs:

# 1 Synthetic chemical fertilizers apply heavy doses of nitrogen to the soil, which is a waste of your money. Only 30-35% of synthetic lawn fertilizers ever reach the grass roots; the rest leaches through the soil and creates major pollution problems in streams, lakes and drinking water supplies. Of the synthetic fertilizer that does reach the grass plants, it is still too much for the grass to properly utilize.

# 2 Chemical synthetic fertilizers are manufactured through chemical processes using non-renewable resources that chemically alter their ingredients. Chemical synthetic fertilizers: (a) are loaded with mineral salts which sterilize and disinfect the soil, killing beneficial earthworms, microbes, fungi, bacteria and organisms, (b) make your soil increasingly acidic every time these fertilizers are applied, inviting more weed growth and hindering strong turf grass growth, (c) over-stimulate grass plants with high levels of nitrogen beyond what they can handle which forces lush, rapid growth. This rapid grass growth actually stresses and weakens the grass and encourages lawn pests and diseases to set in.

Because of the increased pest and disease presence created by the

chemical fertilization, chemical lawn care companies routinely apply pest and disease control chemicals which non-selectively kill more of the beneficial microbes, fungi, bacteria living in the soil. With no beneficial organisms left in the soil to support healthy grass growth, this cycle of "high nitrogen fertilizer, forced lush but weakened grass, increased pests, increased diseases, pest chemical application, herbicide and fungicide application" repeats over and over again. This cycle is why you often see chemically treated lawns look worse and worse as the years go on. The grass plants just cannot handle the onslaught of chemicals.

#3 High nitrogen chemical fertilization in the summer helps weeds more than the turf grass. In this region, cool season turf grasses predominate. These grasses grow best in the cooler months of the spring and the fall. In the heat of the summer, they go dormant. Summer application of high nitrogen, synthetic chemical fertilizers over-stimulates and forces rapid grass growth during periods when grass is trying to go dormant to store energy. Weeds on the other hand, are warm season plants that love to be fertilized in the heat of the summer.

# 4 Using a chemical lawn care program to create a lush green lawn that is the envy of your neighbors is creating a chemical "dump" in your lawn that causes cancer and other health problem in your pets and a growing concern for people as well. There are numerous studies by respected researchers and universities that confirm the undeniable link between lawn herbicides and pesticides and dog cancers.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK...

Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 23 years. She is a graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, an accredited NOFA Organic Land Care Professional, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation projects.

**Sprigs & Twigs is scheduling appointments for Garden Design, Landscape Maintenance, Tree Care Services, Custom Stonework and Custom Carpentry Services.**

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100% Organic Lawn Care

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