

ASK THE LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONAL

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:

info@sprigsandtwigs.net or Linda Lillie,
Sprigs & Twigs Inc, PO Box 245, Gales
Ferry, CT 06335



Question this Week:

Dear Linda – We just moved into our house two years ago and my lawn looks terrible. In one spot, it's full of odd-looking weeds and another spot the grass won't grow at all. Help! Sharon



Linda's Answer:

Note to Readers - After Sharon initially contacted me, we did a soil test to understand better what was going on with her lawn and soil.

Dear Sharon- The soil test results show me that your lawn is suffering from having been treated with chemical fertilizers for quite a long period of time. There are extremely high levels of Phosphorus, about 5 times higher than normal. While grass and plants need small amounts of phosphorus, excess phosphorus pollutes our water supplies and waterways and will remain in the soil for decades. While there is nothing that can be done about it now, any future fertilization of your lawn should be done with organic fertilizers (i.e., make sure the second number in the Nitrogen(N)-Phosphorus(P)-Potassium(K) marking on the fertilizer bag is zero or very low).

The second thing I see in your soil test results is your soil's pH (level of acidity) is about 10 times too acidic for grass to thrive. This is another direct effect of the chemical fertilizers which were used on your lawn – synthetic chemical fertilizers drive the soil pH down. While grass is fairly easy

to grow, it needs a fairly tight pH range of 6.5-6.8 that is just slightly acidic for it to really thrive. On the other hand, the lower the pH of your soil, the better weeds like it and the more the grass struggles. If you see lots of weeds and struggling grass in a lawn, it is most always a very low pH situation. Lime is used to raise pH, but it will take several years to get the soil to reach to the proper levels since lime can be slow-acting. A word of caution – NEVER apply lime without doing a soil test first. You can over-do it and make the soil too alkaline.

Our Organic Lawn Care Program, will get your lawn on the right track and do it completely safely without harming, people, pets or the environment like chemical programs do. Give us a call and we can send one of our 9 NOFA accredited land care professionals out to visit and discuss our program in more detail. Thank you for your question.