

PESTICIDE-FREE SCHOOLYARD MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE



Field prep: Pick up twigs, leaves, pinecones and any materials that may interfere with mowing.

Mowing: Mow grass no lower than three inches in height. Consider raising mowing height if your district only mows once per week to ensure that only 1/3 of leaf blades are removed per mowing session. Leave grass clippings on the ground to return nitrogen and other nutrients to turfgrass.

Overseeding: Pesticide-free schoolyards should be overseeded in late April or early May to fill bare soil areas and outcompete weeds. Overseed with a Kentucky bluegrass mix for greenspace that received more than eight hours of sunlight per day. Overseed with a tall fescue mix for greenspace that receives less than eight hours of sunlight per day. Ensure the newly seeded grass receives at least an inch of water each week. Irrigate regularly during drought conditions.

Compost Topdressing: Schoolyards with thin or heavily compacted soils should receive a compost topdressing between a ¼ or ½ inch every April. Do not exceed a ½ inch of compost topdressing. If topsoil is necessary to use to build up the soil profile or to level the grade of the soil surface, providers should present documentation showing that the material is weed-free.

Fertilization: Use organic fertilizers after overseeding to support seedling growth after germination. Companies that produce quality organic fertilizers include Sustane, BioGreen Organics, Earthworks Turf, PJC Organic and Organic Approach.



Mowing: Maintain regular mowing schedule of once per week at a height of three to four inches. Do not mow during drought conditions.

Overseeding: Overseeding should occur in September after temperatures have cooled and existing turf has resumed active growing. The overseeding should occur after aerating and topdressing with ¼ or ½ inch of compost.



Fertilization: Late September or early October applications of a slow-release organic and nitrogen only fertilizer will help grass recover from hot, dry summers.

Clean-up: Rake leaves or mow to produce leaf mulch. Leaves can be left on turf areas to encourage nutrient recycling, but no more than 10% - 20% of turf areas should be covered.

Mowing: Last mow of the season should be two inches.



**Midwest Grows Green educates and empowers citizens
to take sustainable landscaping action.**



Madison, WI



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