

Canton clinic offers tips on yard repair

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Canton-based RepairClinic.com, the online store for replacement parts for outdoor power equipment, home appliances and heating and cooling equipment, shared five simple ways to repair a yard after winter damage.

“At the first signs of spring, homeowners tend to be overwhelmed by the damaged, dull appearance of their yards,” said Jeff Linderman, RepairClinic.com’s in-house landscaping and outdoor power equipment specialist. “Fortunately, just a few simple steps will repair and revive yards for the season.”

The steps:

- Tune up outdoor power equipment and gardening tools.

“Proper care of outdoor power equipment will positively affect the appearance of the yard, improve efficiency and extend the life of the equipment,” Linderman said. “For example, dull lawn mower blades will tear grass, rather than cut, and result in a yellow hue over your lawn.”

- Clear debris. Remove pebbles, stones, branches and any other debris that litter the lawn. Pay particular attention to the grass along sidewalks and driveways, which are areas most likely to have collected snowblower-thrown debris.

- De-thatch and aerate. Thatch is a layer of mixed dead grass that prevents the grass from properly obtaining the nutrients needed to be healthy. Aeration is the process of creating passageways in soil for greater air, water and nutrient intake.

“Fertilization and other lawn maintenance efforts will be ineffective until thatch is removed,” Linderman said. “You can remove thatch with a basic rake or by renting a professional de-thatcher. After de-thatching, aerate the lawn with a pitchfork or by renting a professional push or gasoline-powered aerator. These are critical first steps to creating a healthy lawn.”

- Fertilize early with a strategy.

“Purchasing the wrong fertilizer can very easily kill your grass, trees, shrubbery and other vegetation in your yard,” Linderman said. “Purchase a soil test kit from a hardware store or garden center (usually under \$10) and measure your soil’s nitrogen, potassium and pH levels. Use that information, coupled with your yard’s unique conditions (grass type, foot traffic, presence of sunlight and shade, regional climate and vulnerability to weed and pest infestations), to find the right fertilizer formula for your yard.”

A lawn should be fertilized in the spring and fall. Package application directions should be followed closely.

- Plan ahead.

“Take time to plan well improvements to your yard,” Linderman said. “Think about what will work best for your yard in the short- and long-term future.”

Homeowners can save money and time by repairing outdoor power equipment on their own. RepairClinic's free advanced online troubleshooting and how-to repair help system empowers people to fix common problems associated with outdoor power equipment, major home appliances and heating and cooling equipment. DIYers enter a model number to choose from a list of common symptoms for that particular model, troubleshoot and learn the likely causes, purchase the correct part and watch expertly-produced how-to repair videos.