

Back Messages: Maintaining Home Lawn

1. Lime may be applied at any time of the year, although fall application is considered optimum. Use a high quality agricultural ground limestone product to meet the lime recommendation on this report. Manufacturers of agricultural ground limestone products provide a number called the calcium carbonate equivalent, or CCE, on the label. CCEs with high numerical values (close to 100 or above) indicate a pure lime source (greater ability to neutralize soil acidity). The amount of lime recommended on this report is based on an agricultural ground limestone with a CCE of 100. If your lime source is close to or equal to 100, you don't need to adjust the recommended amount. In the event that you use a lime source with a CCE well below or above 100, use the following formula to adjust the required amount.

$$\text{Actual liming material required} = \frac{(\text{Soil test recommendation in lbs of lime}/1000 \text{ square feet}) \times 100}{\text{CCE of liming material}}$$

Example Only:

Soil Test Recommendation: Apply 75 lbs lime/1000 square feet

CCE on label: 80 percent

$$\text{Actual liming material required} = \frac{(75 \text{ lbs of lime}) \times 100}{80}$$

$$= 94 \text{ lb liming material}/1000 \text{ square feet}$$

2. If the lime recommendation exceeds 100 pounds per 1000 square feet, split the recommended amount into 2 or more separate applications 4 to 6 months apart. No application should exceed 100 lbs per 1000 square feet.
3. When possible, use fertilizer containing 30 % or more of the total nitrogen in a slowly available form as water insoluble nitrogen (WIN) or controlled release nitrogen (CRN). This information is provided on the fertilizer label.
4. Soil should be retested in three years for new recommendations.
5. Penn State Cooperative Extension publications dealing with turfgrass management are available from your county extension office.
6. **NITROGEN RECOMMENDATION:** There is no reliable test for evaluating the amount of nitrogen (N) in soils that is available to turfgrasses over the growing season. The recommendation on the front of the report is the amount of actual N that needs to be supplied annually to ensure optimum turf quality.

7. Get the most out of your fertilizer while protecting water resources

The following are suggestions for maximizing the efficiency of your fertilizer program, while minimizing nutrient losses to water resources through leaching and runoff.

- Apply nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and lime according to soil test recommendations. Do not apply more than is needed as this may harm the turf and contribute to leaching and runoff.
- On turf, apply fertilizer in two or three applications over the growing season so as to meet the needs of your turf at the appropriate time of year (mid to late spring, late summer, and late fall).
- Returning clippings to lawns can cut nitrogen fertilizer use by up to one-third.
- Keep fertilizer on the lawn and not on pavement. Shut off your spreader when moving across driveways or maintenance roads, and blow or sweep granules from pavement onto the turf. In small lawns enclosed by sidewalks and driveways, use a drop spreader for greater accuracy.
- Do not apply fertilizer to lawns under summer dormancy or on frozen surfaces in winter.
- Fill and empty fertilizer spreaders in an area where spills can be easily cleaned up. Use your spilled fertilizer; don't wash it into the street or storm sewers.