

# Fall – a great time to turf that thirsty turf

Jodie Steeves  
Submitted

With a forecast that the next six months will be the warmest on record, residents are advised to prepare for at least another year of extremely dry weather by making landscape changes this fall so they can conserve water next season.

Fall is a good time to replace water-hungry turf by mulch-seeding or replacing existing lawn with drought tolerant turf or seed. One such product available in the is Eco-Turf Blend, which requires 40 per cent less water than standard lawn grasses, advises Barry Paul, who owns Eco-Turf Farms in Kelowna.

Lawns are among the heaviest users of water in the landscape, so they're a good place to begin in trying to conserve.

The soil is available until mid-November or freeze-up, says Paul, who explains that they switched from standard turf to this deep-rooted blend about three years ago in response to customer demand for a more WaterWise option.

When removing existing turf, replace it with a deep layer of good topsoil before replanting with water-conserving lawn. Roots of Eco-Turf can grow to 15 inches, compared to four to six inches for standard varieties, according to Paul.

Okanagan Nurseries Association executive-director Owen Steele suggests if you decide to put in plants instead of turf, begin by replacing just a portion of your existing lawn with drought-tolerant plants.

"Fall is a good time to plant because the air is cool, but the soil is still warm, which is ideal for roots to get established before frost. They'll get started growing again as soon as the soil thaws in spring," she notes.

As well, some perennials can be planted by seed in fall, including black-cherry or gulfenia; rubbedice; conopsis; and achillea.

Autumn is also a good time of year to tinker with your plantings. Steele recommends you take a walk around your landscape and make notes on which plants did not do well in our hot, dry summer. These might be a better location where they would get a bit more water or shade. Remember to group plants with similar water needs.

For a listing of WaterWise plants that might do better in this location find the new Make Water Work Collection, and a listing of local nurseries that carry the collection, at [www.MakeWaterWork.ca/plants](http://www.MakeWaterWork.ca/plants). The collection was created in partnership between the Okanagan Basin Water Board's WaterWise program, OCA and Byrds Nurseries.

For more ideas, browse the extensive plant database on the OCA website ([www.okanaganwaterscapes.org](http://www.okanaganwaterscapes.org)). You will also find a Landscape Assessment Tool there to help you reduce outdoor watering.

Steele is an enthusiastic fan of creating compost-lawns that drop to the ground in fall and a perfect start. Small ones can be left where they fall, but large ones should be mowed or shredded first. But don't use water leaves, she adds.

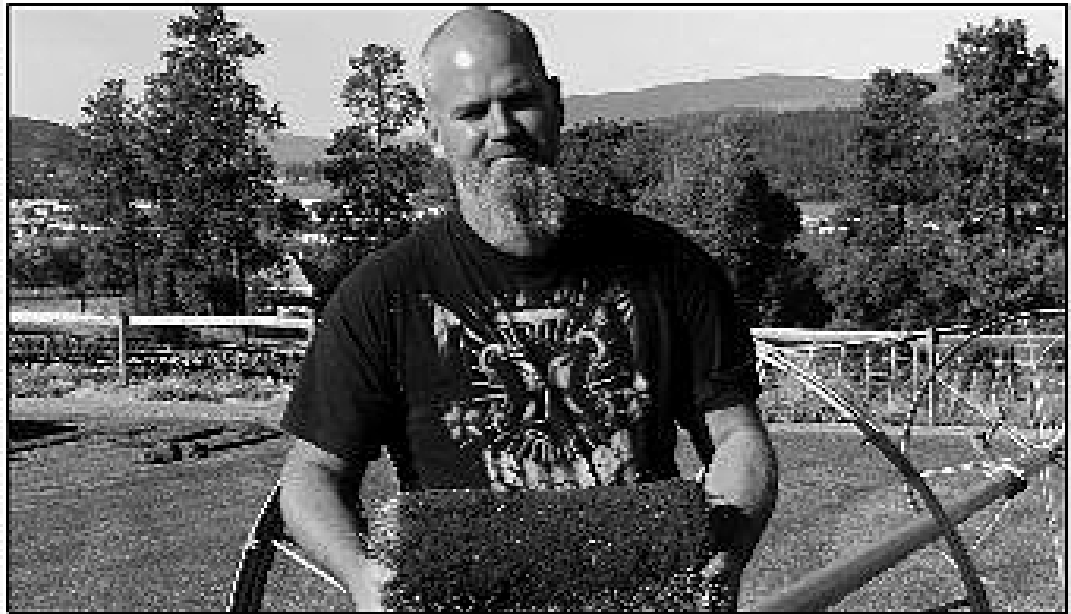
If you do decide to replace an existing thirsty lawn you can also smother it over winter in preparation for a colorful xeriscape landscape or drought-tolerant lawn in spring. First, cut it very short, soak it well and cover it with wet cardboard. Mulch that with four inches of Gypgrov or well-rotted manure, or wood chips if you plan to put in gas straws. Keep the area wet so the grass will sink down over winter.

Then, do a top-dressing in spring to ensure the turf has rotted before seeding or planting, advises Steele.

With 24 per cent of all water used on household lawns and gardens, and less water available per person than anywhere in Canada, valley residents are encouraged to reduce outdoor water use this summer and fall. Take the pledge to Make Water Work at [www.MakeWaterWork.ca](http://www.MakeWaterWork.ca).

Take the pledge to:

- Water plants. Not pavement.
- Water between dusk and dawn.
- Leave lawn 5-4 cm (2-3 inches) tall
- Leave grass clippings as mulch
- Top dress with compost; and
- Change out some lawn for drought-tolerant turf and/or native and low-water variety plants.



Barry Paul, owner of Eco-Turf Farms in Kelowna, holds a roll of turf.

## WorkSafeBC – Workers' Compensation Board of B.C. hereby gives notice of proposed amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (BC Reg. 296/97, as amended) and notice of proposed new Lower Maximum Administrative Penalties Regulation (pursuant to section 196.1 of the Workers Compensation Act).

The proposed regulatory amendments are about:

- OHS Citations: proposed new Lower Maximum Administrative Penalties Regulation (LMAPR)
- Consequential amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR) relating to Employer Incident Investigations

### Public Hearings

You are invited to provide feedback on the proposed regulatory amendments and the OHS Citations Policy by oral presentations at the public hearings and/or in writing. Please register if you wish to make an oral presentation at the public hearings by telephoning **604.278.7594** or toll-free in BC: **1.877.379.7599** prior to the hearing. Information on the proposed amendments and the public hearing, including details of registration/presentation procedures, are on [worksafebc.com/2015pubhearings](http://worksafebc.com/2015pubhearings).

### Public Hearing Details

Date	Location
October 6, 2015	Coast Victoria HarbourSide Hotel & Marina 145 Kingston Street, Victoria, BC
October 8, 2015	Best Western Hotel Plus Kelowna Hotel & Suites 2102 Highway 17 N, Kelowna, BC
October 8, 2015	<b>Via video conference</b> Conesany Family Farm Kootenay 1102 Slater Road NW, Cranbrook, BC
October 11, 2015	Coast Inn of the North 770 Humeswick Street, Prince George, BC
October 15, 2015	Executive Airport Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre 7111 Westwender Highway, Richmond, BC
Session Times:	8:00 pm to 9:00 pm 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

### Written Submissions

The deadline for receipt of written submissions is 4:00 pm on Thursday, October 15, 2015. Written submissions can be made online or via email, fax, mail, or delivered at the public hearing during the session times.

Online: [Via the WorkSafeBC website at worksafebc.com/2015pubhearings](http://www.WorkSafeBC-website-at-worksafebc.com/2015pubhearings)

Email: [chapeloffeedback@worksafebc.com](mailto:chapeloffeedback@worksafebc.com)

Fax: 604.278.7594; or toll-free in BC: 1.877.379.7599

Mail: Policy, Regulation and Research Division  
WorkSafeBC – Workers' Compensation Board of B.C.  
P.O. Box 5154, Station Central  
Vancouver, BC V6B 5L5

Notice of proposed amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, notice of proposed new Lower Maximum Administrative Penalties Regulation and notice of Public Hearing pursuant to sections 215 and 226 of the Workers Compensation Act

WORKSAFE BC