

# DORMANT BERMUDA



## Improved Turf Health

Regular overseeding can cause your warm season, hybrid Bermuda grass to be sparse, weak or prone to problems. The overseeding process inhibits the buildup of the reserves that Bermuda grass needs to make it through the winter, which means there will be less energy for re-growth in the spring. When warm weather arrives, the strong Ryegrass competes with the dormant Bermuda for sunlight, water, nutrients and even oxygen. This competition keeps Bermuda from gaining strength through the summer and by the time the Ryegrass finally recedes, the weak Bermuda may not have spread as much as it should have.

Suspending the overseeding process for at least one season restores the root system of the Bermuda that would otherwise be damaged during the cooler months. Suspending overseeding also allows the Bermuda to store the necessary nutrients needed for vigorous growth in the warm season. There are some simple steps you can take to care for your dormant Bermuda that will help it grow back stronger and thicker in the next growing season while saving you money, time and frustration.

First, in October, begin reducing the irrigation water amount by 50%. Before your grass goes dormant, in mid-November, put down an 11-52-0 winterizing fertilizer to prepare for the next season of Bermuda. After the first frost of the season, stop watering your plant material altogether. Not only does not overseeding help improve the health of your Bermuda grass, for every season you forgo overseeding, you save over 8,000 gallons of water per 1,000 square feet of grass.

## Your New Winter Routine

While Bermuda is dormant, it only needs to be mowed twice a month to achieve a clean and even appearance. During the two weeks you do not mow, fill ruts and indentions with screened fill dirt to eliminate hazards and prepare your lawn to look its springtime best. Controlling weeds with a post-emergent herbicide during Bermuda's dormant months takes advantage of the natural cycle of the Bermuda to combat the weeds. We recommend using Triple Strike, a product commonly found at your local home improvement store, for grassy or broad leaf weeds growing in dormant Bermuda lawns. If you overseeded your lawn and have weeds growing in your winter Ryegrass, you may wish to consult a Certified Pest Applicator; find one at <http://www.sb.state.az.us/index.php>.

When the soil temperature reaches 70 degrees, typically when daytime temperatures are consistently in the 90s, your Bermuda will come out of hibernation and begin showing the results of your winter labor. Just before or as that happens, put down a 21-0-0 fertilizer to stimulate growth and enhance color. Also, begin watering again two to three days a week, adjusting your schedule for temperature and rainfall.

