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## AERIFICATION

In simplest terms, aerification is the process of punching holes in the ground. This can be done by hand or with a machine. Tines are the name given to the actual part that makes the hole in the ground. There are two types of tines solid and hollow. Solid tines simply punch a hole in the ground and hollow tines actually remove a plug of soil. Solid tines can provide temporary results, but hollow tines provide the best long term solution.

There are several reasons why aeration is important.

First, this process can relieve soil compaction. The soil needs a proper balance of air and water. If the soil is too tight this balance is out of sync. Results of compaction are poor root development and slow water infiltration. There simply is no room for the roots or water to go. Solid tines provide fast results with minimal cleanup afterwards. Hollow tines provide the best results, but there is more work involved.

Secondly, aeration helps reduce thatch. Thatch is the layer of dead and decaying plant material at the top of the soil surface. A small amount of thatch is healthy, but a thick layer of thatch impedes water movement into the soil and it can prevent fertilizers and control products from reaching the soil surface. Removing a soil plug with a hollow tine is the preferred method. These plugs or cores are then broken up on the soil surface with the use of a drag mat. This spreading of the broken cores over top the turf helps work soil into the thatch. Over time this technique will restore the proper depth of thatch.

Finally, aerating along with topdressing is a great way to renovate a turf area with minimal disruption. If you are faced with a poor soil, your options are limited. Option one is to start over from scratch with a total renovation. Option two is to improve the current soil by topdressing. Topdressing is the process of adding compost and other nutrients on top of the turf. These amendments work best when they are incorporated into the soil profile. A great way to do this is to first apply the amendments and then aerate with hollow tines. The final step is to incorporate the soil plugs and amendments by use of a drag mat. This process will have to be done several times, but the results are extremely effective.

Aerating is a critical component to a successful lawn. The key is picking the right type of aerification for your situation.

**“Make YOUR Property a Showcase!”**