

FBMG Help Desk  
**Question of the Week**

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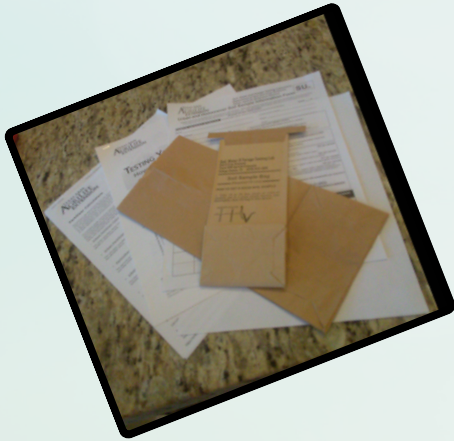
Spring is coming and I want to make sure my yard is ready,  
what if anything should I be doing?

*Lets take a peek...*

# *It All Begins with the Soil*

*It's where plants live!*

Healthy organisms are better able to thrive and fend off disease.  
Have your soil tested.



*It is easy and well worth the effort.*

- 1. Go to [soiltesting.tamu.edu](http://soiltesting.tamu.edu)*
- 2. Print the Urban Soil Submittal Form ( 1 form per sample )*
- 3. Fill it out and follow the instructions on page 2 of the form*
- 4. You can also prepay the fee online using the same web page*

## *Remove the Guess Work*

**Get a Test For Each Area of your Yard**

*There are multiple areas; the lawn, the raised bed, the vegetable garden, the butterfly garden, the front yard, the back yard, and so on. They may all be different. Make a simple drawing and label your soil samples to match your drawing.*



*The soil Analysis Report will show the current levels of nutrients and provide fertilizer recommendations of N-P-K*

*All actions to improve soil can then become more deliberate.*

<https://cdn-de.agrilife.org/extension/departments/scsc/scsc-pu-043/publications/files/testing-your-soil-how-to-collect-and-send-samples.pdf>

# Inspect your Irrigation System

***Ensure all systems are ready and in good working order!***

*Ensuring that your irrigation system is in good working order saves valuable resources; time, money, and water.*



## **Check your weather forecast, after the last freeze:**

- Do a performance test on the system
  - make sure all heads are in good working order, free of debris, are in proper orientation to the lawn, etc.
  - make sure that the system is leak free and the heads provide proper coverage
  - ensure the main controller is in good working order with the timers and the zones working properly
  - check hoses, sprayers and sprinklers to make sure that they are leak free in good working order
- Set up the rain barrel and make sure it is in good working order
- Make any necessary repairs

# Aerate, De-Thatch & Top Dress



Aeriation helps to improve oxygen airflow, improve drainage, and reduce soil compaction by removing plugs from the soil.

De-thatching helps to reduce buildup of dead organic matter found between the surface of the soil and the turf.



Top dressing is the process of adding a thin layer (1/8 to 1/4") of material i.e. soil or compost on top of the lawn.

***\*\*\* These should be done only after the last freeze. \*\*\****

*Take time to plan and research!*

*A little bit of planning helps ensure success.*

**Explore options for your garden.**

- Natives, perennials, annuals, edibles, pollinator attractors, herbs, ornamentals
- Make sure to group them according to soil, water and sun needs



**Examine your tools. Make sure they are;**

- clean
- sharp
- in good condition



***Do you have questions  
about your home  
landscape and plants?***

***Contact the Fort Bend  
Master Gardener Help Desk***

***Email:  
FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu***

***Phone:  
281-341-7068***

***The Help Desk is manned  
Monday thru Friday,  
9am-Noon***

<https://www.johnson.k-state.edu/lawn-garden/agent-articles/lawns/watering-the-lawn.html>

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2010/10/audit.pdf>

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2010/10/audit.pdf>

<http://ag.umass.edu/turf/fact-sheets/what-is-thatch>

[https://www.lsuagcenter.com/topics/lawn\\_garden/commercial\\_horticulture/turfgrass/management-practices/cultural-maintenance-practices/topdressing-turfgrass-sod](https://www.lsuagcenter.com/topics/lawn_garden/commercial_horticulture/turfgrass/management-practices/cultural-maintenance-practices/topdressing-turfgrass-sod)

[https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/travis/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Simple\\_Steps\\_Lawn\\_Care\\_2009.pdf](https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/travis/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Simple_Steps_Lawn_Care_2009.pdf)  
[Topdressing A Home Lawn | Home & Garden Information Center \(clemson.edu\)](#)

[https://aggie-hort.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate\\_archives/1999/WEBjan99.p65.html](https://aggie-hort.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate_archives/1999/WEBjan99.p65.html)  
[http://publications.tamu.edu/TURF\\_LANDSCAPE/PUB\\_turf\\_Thatch%20Management%20for%20Home%20Lawns.pdf](http://publications.tamu.edu/TURF_LANDSCAPE/PUB_turf_Thatch%20Management%20for%20Home%20Lawns.pdf)

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2010/10/audit.pdf>

[Home - School of Irrigation \(tamu.edu\)](#)

[Irrigation: Inspecting and Correcting Turf Irrigation System Problems - 4.722 - Extension \(colostate.edu\)](#)

[https://aggie-hort.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate\\_archives/1999/WEBjan99.p65.html](https://aggie-hort.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate_archives/1999/WEBjan99.p65.html)

[https://aggie-hort.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate\\_archives/1999/WEBjan99.p65.html](https://aggie-hort.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/hortupdate_archives/1999/WEBjan99.p65.html)