

Fertilizer Recommendations for a Low Maintenance Level of St. Augustinegrass in Indian River County

- Always follow state statutes and local ordinances.
- Have the pH determined on a soil sample from your yard. This can be done free of charge at the IRC Extension office. Call (772) 770-5030 x 1 for more information about soil testing.
- Apply no more than 1 pound (lb) of nitrogen (N) per 1,000 square feet (1lb/1000 sq.ft.) of turf per application.
- 50% of the nitrogen source HAS to be in a slow release form.
- Apply 1lb N/1000 sq.ft. in late March or early April when all danger of frost has past. Apply another ½ lb N/1000 sq.ft. in late May before the blackout period begins on June 1. Apply a final ½ lb before October 15th but after the blackout period is over on October 1.
- No phosphorus (P) can be added unless soil or plant tissue test shows deficiency. Contact the extension office for more information about testing for phosphorus deficiency.
- If grass turns yellowish during the summer months, it might be an iron (Fe) deficiency, not a nitrogen one. Apply a chelated iron product to turf grass to return color to normal.
- More information can be found at the Florida Friendly Landscaping website: <http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu/index.html> and by calling the IRC Master Gardener Volunteer plant clinic desk at (772) 770-5030 x 1 or emailing ircmg1@gmail.com.

Indian River County Fertilizer Ordinance (<http://ircstormwater.com/fertilizer.htm>)

The Indian River Lagoon is experiencing nutrient pollution, caused by fertilizer and other nitrogen sources. We are working through civic, government, and industry stakeholder groups to develop solutions to return our lagoon to a healthier state.

Fertilizer Requirements from Ordinance No. 2013-014:

- Fertilizer cannot be applied:
 - Between June 1 and September 30
 - To saturated soils, or when rainfall is more than 2" in a 24- hour period
 - When a Flood/Tropical Storm/Hurricane Watch or Warning is in effect for any part of the County
- Fertilizer shall not be applied within 10' of any water body.
- No P shall be used without the proper soil or plant tissue test showing a deficiency.
- Fertilizer with N shall contain at least 50% slow-release N.
- Packaged fertilizer must be applied in accordance with the requirements on the labels.
- Fertilizer shall not be applied, spilled, or otherwise deposited on any impervious surfaces.
- Fertilizer shall not go into stormwater drains, ditches, conveyances, or water bodies.
- Grass clippings, vegetative material or debris shall not go into stormwater drains, ditches, conveyances, water bodies, wetlands, sidewalks or roadways.
- There are exemptions for trees and shrubs grown for edible fruit, and vegetable gardens.



CALCULATING FERTILIZER RATES FOR HOME LAWNS

In order to give your lawn the nutrition that it needs, but keeping the lagoon free of excess nitrogen and phosphorus, it is important to apply the proper amount of fertilizer. Follow this step-by-step process to find the amount of fertilizer you will need for your lawn.

A bag of fertilizer always has a ratio of Nitrogen-Phosphorus-Potassium (N-P-K) and it is expressed as a percentage in the bag that you are purchasing. For example, a bag that is labeled 20-0-8 means that there is 20% N, 0% P and 8% K. In other words, a 50lb bag of 20-0-8 would have 10lbs N, 0lbs P, and 4lbs K. For more information read: "St. Augustinegrass for Florida Lawns" <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/lh010> and "Homeowner Best Management Practices for the Home Lawn" <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep236>

Step I. Calculating Your Lawn Size to be Fertilized

Lot size, width in feet (A): _____ Lot size, depth in feet (B): _____

Lot size, in square feet (**A x B**) = **Carry number down to box below labeled #1**

Areas to be added together and then subtracted from number above:

- a. House footprint (length x width) _____ b. Driveway (length x width) _____
c. Walkways (length x width) _____ d. Pool/Patio (length x width) _____
f. Landscaped beds (length x width) _____ (all beds added together)

Add a, b, c, d, e and f to find #2 and put in box.

Lot size (#1) minus (#2) total hardscape footage

#3 = square feet of lawn

Step II. Calculating Fertilizer Application Rate of Nitrogen

#4 = 1 lb per 1000 sq. ft.* divided by _____ % of nutrient in bag = lbs fertilizer per 1000 sq. ft.
(expressed numerically as .00)

Step III. Calculating Pounds of Nitrogen Fertilizer to Apply

#3 X **#4** = lbs of Nitrogen needed for your lawn
1000 sq. ft.

Example: The bag of fertilizer you have purchased has a formulation of 20-0-8 (see top of page for complete explanation).

- 1 lb divided by .20 = 5 lbs of Nitrogen need per 1000 sq. ft. If your turf alone (**#3** of **Step III**) is 4000 sq.ft. then: $\frac{4000 \text{ sq. ft. of lawn} \times 5 \text{ lbs N}}{1000 \text{ sq. ft.}} = 20 \text{ lbs of N}$ is needed for the turf area.
- If the total bag of fertilizer weighs 100 lbs with 20% N then you have 20 lbs of N in the bag and you will be able to cover the 4000 sq. ft. lawn with that one bag. If you buy a 50 lbs bag with the same formulation, then you will need two bags of fertilizer.

For additional help, please call the IRC Extension Master Gardener desk at (772) 770-5030 x 1.

*Maximum rate allotted for N per application. For P, maximum of 0.25 P₂O₅ per 1000 sq.ft. A soil or tissue test showing P deficiency is required before any P can be applied in IRC. Call the extension office (772) 770-5030 x 1 for more information.