

Successful Sod

New sod can drastically improve the look and feel of your outdoor space. However, initial establishment requires close monitoring and is extremely important for long term success. The below instructions are a general guide to get started, however each yard is unique, so a helpful way to test soil moisture in your specific yard is to stick your finger about 2-3" into your soil to see if it feels thick and wet or crumbly and dry prior to watering. Areas near the lake often have more sand in the soil and therefore dry out faster than other areas, which have thicker clay soil that stays wet longer.

Watering - Newly installed seed or sod should be kept moist and squishy for the first two weeks, and foot/pet traffic should be avoided.

- If installed during cool weather (less than 75 degrees during the day), water with a sprinkler once daily in the morning for about 20-30 minutes.
- If installed during warm weather (75 degrees or above during the day), water twice daily in the morning and early evening for 20-30 minutes.
- For the remainder of the season, taper watering down to 2-3 times per week in the morning to encourage deeper roots.
- Under-watering is the most common issue with new grass. If the above regimen isn't followed, some edges of sod may appear to be shriveling up or browning.
- Over-watering is a less common problem, but sod that has pooling water for extended periods or becomes yellowish in color may mean it is getting too much water. Testing soil as mentioned above helps avoid this.



Under-watered sod

Mowing – Regular mowing is important after sod roots begin to establish. The first mow should take place **approximately 2-3 weeks after installation**. To test if ready, lightly pull up on the corner of a piece of sod after 2 weeks. If it stays in place, mowing should be ok. If it pulls up, you should wait and check again in 1-2 days. Waiting too long to mow can create patchy areas of sod as some blades shade others out, so it is important to mow around the 2-3 week mark when sod has roots, and then **continue to mow weekly after. Set mower blade to around 2" high**. For best results, continue at this level to help keep moisture in. Mowing too short can cause grass to dry out more quickly.



Over-watered sod

Fertilizing and Treating Weeds – We do not recommend fertilizing with any type of fertilizer for the first season as it be too strong for newly established roots. Weeds naturally occur over time as wind disburse seeds in the air, and the best deterrent to keeping them under control is to have healthy, strong grass with minimal exposed soil areas. **Fertilizing 4 times per season keeps nutrient content high and grass strong.** Organic fertilizer can be applied at the same duration but may require some hand weeding or occasional chemical applications to control aggressive weeds.

Addressing Patchy Areas – If you have some small, patchy areas of sod after a few months of establishment, don't worry, these can easily be filled in by raking out the dry, dead blades to expose soil, adding grass seed and covering with a light layer of peat moss or straw. For best results, do this in spring or fall when we have regular rainfall, or water daily for the first two weeks to establish. For shadier lawn areas, seeding 1-2 times yearly can help to keep these areas thick.

For additional sod questions, take a picture of the area and send it to info@kemoralandscapes.com or your designer.

