



# Grass Roots

www.cmscustomlawn.com

4151 S. 84 St. Omaha, NE 68127 402.738.1718

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## Turf Talk 2017.02

At this time of the year, we

evaluate the lawns of many prospective clients; and we continuously focus on the value of turf density. We are regularly asked to spray weeds only; however, we stress the importance of a complete fertilizer program, regular aeration and periodic overseeding. In the absence of a healthy stand of turf, weeds will continue to re-emerge. If your lawn is thin, consider fall seeding to increase the density.

What weeds have we been seeing? Henbit is a winter annual with purple flowers, which, if left alone, would die out with warmer temperatures. Even though we have seen more of it over the past few years, it has trouble becoming established in a thicker lawn. There are some dandelions out there as well as some volunteer Veronica Speedwell.



We are finishing our first round of applications, and we will soon begin the second. Later in the second round, we will be on the lookout for nutsedge.

Nutsedge will appear to be a lighter green and grow taller than the rest of your turf.

Because of the rains we have had, supplemental irrigation is not necessary, with the exception of irrigating after a fertilizer application. Still, turn on your system and have it checked, so that when you need it, it is ready to go.

Spring is usually a time of rapid turf growth. Continue to mow high, at 3.5 inches or higher, frequently enough to avoid removing a 1/3 of the blade at any one mowing, and be sure to use a sharp blade. As always, if you have any questions or would like us to visit with you on your lawn, please [contact us](#).



We would like to introduce you to the CM's irrigation division. This team has more face-to face contact with our clients than any other division; so chances are if you haven't met one of these individuals yet, you probably will in the future. We regularly receive comments from our clients, complimenting this division's knowledge, professionalism, patience, and courtesy. We would like to take this opportunity to recognize them for the talents they share with the CM's team.

As you might expect, the irrigation division installs and repairs commercial and residential irrigations systems; however, they also install and maintain water features and landscape lighting. They truly function as a team, collaborating with each other and with our other divisions, aiding in the installation process. Their dedication to trouble-shooting and problem-solving elevates this team to the top of their craft.

Way to go Tad, Jose, Rafa, Jim and Dan! Thank you for being such a great representation of CM's and for continuously striving to **EXPECT EXCELLENCE**.

Our crews appreciate your compliments. If you have a moment to provide feedback to our crew, [contact us](#) or [post a review](#).



Pictured Left to Right: Jose, Dan, Jim, Rafael, Tad.

## What's all the buzz?

Recently, one of our clients noticed bees swarming around their yard, eventually settling into one of their

trees. While encountering a swarm can be an understandably alarming experience, stay calm. It is imperative to avoid killing them whenever possible. Bees are an important part of our ecosystem as they are vital to pollination and food production. Many species are endangered too.

Luckily, our client made a great decision and contacted a beekeeper to help remove the swarm. Here are a few tips if you do encounter a swarm on your property:

- Swarms tend to be temporary. They may just be resting while looking for a more permanent place to stay.
- Keep your distance from the swarm. Do not spray them with chemicals or water and do not throw anything at them. The bees are not focused on you unless they feel threatened.
- Contact a beekeeper. If you are unable to find one on your own, there are several groups like the [Nebraska Beekeepers Association](#) or the [Omaha Bee Club](#) that may be able to help. **Many beekeepers will remove the swarm for free!**



Bees stay grouped so tightly that it is difficult to distinguish where the tree ends and the bees begin.

Be sure to check out our blog for more pictures and a video of the impressive swarm.



## Reminders

1. Plant spring annuals.
2. Schedule sprinkler turn on services.
3. Call our landscape designers to plan a landscape for a Mother's Day gift— Gift certificates also available!



## Ask The Arborist

# What are these mobile bags of destruction on my most prized plants?

They contain bagworms. In your trees and plants, they do everything from eat and nest to reproduce by the hundreds. One season you will see only a few, and the next there will be many more than you anticipated (about 500-1,000 eggs per bag). All the more reason to act fast when they are first spotted.

The pupa stage (caterpillar) of the perennial insect pest *Thyridopteryx ephemeraeformis* is the most destructive, defoliating evergreens such as junipers, pines, spruce, and arborvitae. They also have a taste for our deciduous friends as well, including burning bush, black locusts, honey locusts, sycamore and others. The bagworm can be identified by closely inspecting your plants for dangling bags. In the beginning of summer, they poke their little heads out and move along branches and stems eating or collecting needles or leaves to add onto their bag. This can result in a devastating amount of defoliation if left untreated for too long. They travel by "ballooning," by which, on windy days, they swing their way to neighboring host plants by way of a silken strand. They are also excellent crawlers, and you may find them commuting over sidewalks and on buildings.

Once bagworms are identified as the offender, it is time to carry out the next step: control. Less severe infestations can be addressed by plucking the bagworms off the branches and destroying them in a bucket of soapy water or burning them. Insecticide sprays can control more severe infestations. The best time to spray is during the young larval stage and after ballooning has taken place. CM's A Cut Above offers a spray program that targets bagworms and a wide range of other insect pests as well.

We usually start to see bagworm activity in June. Consider treatment if you know you have a tree or shrub that is susceptible to bagworms or has had bagworms in the past. Check the ground and grass for tiny caterpillars (1cm big) that may have already started to spin their bags. They are very active in the beginning stages, so you will see a lot of movement. Throughout the growing process, they can grow to one and half inches long. Keep in mind that one bagworm encases hundreds of eggs through the winter and hatches in the summer, so it does not take much time for damage to take place. You can pluck dormant bags in the fall and early spring before hatching.

Please [contact a CM's Licensed Arborist](#) if you think you have bagworms or another plant health issue you would like to identify and treat.



E-mail: [admin@cmstustomlawm.com](mailto:admin@cmstustomlawm.com)  
Fax: 402.614.2771  
Phone: 402.738.1718

CM's  
4151 S. 84 St.  
Omaha, NE 68127