

# 'Fall' into a healthy lawn

## Aerating, over seeding can bring a smile, come spring

By Brooke Blew

The season has changed, and your Fall to-do list is growing. In addition to switching your closet over to warmer clothes, dusting off your crock-pot and winterizing your home for winter ... don't forget about your lawn.

"Last year we were hit with snowfall very early on," said Mark Forgione of Forgione Lawn Care in Clinton. "Many people missed their window of opportunity for a thorough Fall lawn clean-up and faced snow molds and subsequent disease, die-off problems and greatly depleted soil conditions."

These factors, coupled with the damaging effects of extreme amounts of road salt and sand on landscapes, walkways and driveways – made for a much greater need for Spring revitalization.

"And not only did we have a longer winter, but we had a much harder winter with more storms last year than in the

past several years. These factors combined made for greater amounts of landscaping and lawn care work this past spring," Forgione said.

He suggests employing the following three strategies this Fall to ensure a healthy lawn next Spring:

1. Always think at least one season ahead, especially during the Fall. Properly prime your soil during this time with nutrients for sustainability over the winter – and growth and vigor the coming Spring (and Summer).

To achieve this, try Fall aerating and over seeding. These two methods are recognized by all lawn care experts as the best treatment to control thatch, reduce compaction, fill-in bare spots and revitalize growth.

Also consider topdressing with compost, and lawn fertilization.

2. Thoroughly clean your lawn of all debris to prevent mold, disease and other prob-

lematic conditions.

3. Winter can be the harshest season of all on your lawn and property. When you have the option, select ice-melt products that will be gentle on not just your lawn, but also the surrounding environment, nearby waterways and your pets.