

## Soil Preparation for New Lawns in Greeley

Greeley residents must get a variance when planting new seed or sod to water the lawn outside of the watering restrictions. If a variance is not granted, residents must follow Greeley's watering schedule or risk getting violations and fines. Variances must be obtained when landscaping a new home or planting seed or sod in an established yard.

Greeley requires residents to prepare the soil with compost (organic matter) to acquire a variance. When soil is properly prepared with organic matter before planting, the landscape needs less water. Properly prepared soil retains water and diminishes runoff from the lawn onto paved surfaces. Soil in Greeley is mostly clay with pockets of sandy soil. Both sand and clay are minerals that lack organic matter. Compost is a mixture that consists of decayed organic matter and is used for fertilizing and conditioning soil. Compost promotes microbiological activity in soils necessary for plant healthy growth.

To apply, the homeowner or landscape installer must bring the following items to our office:

- an original receipt/invoice for seed or sod
- an original receipt/invoice for compost (**not top soil or fertilizer**)
- a photo of rototilling or receipt of tiller purchase/rental
- a sprinkler permit number (if applicable)
- There is no fee for a variance

The variance will be issued at the time of application. A member of our staff will perform a visual inspection of the new lawn within a week. If the lawn installation is found to be in non-compliance, the variance will be revoked.

Compost must be added at a minimum rate of 4 cubic yards per 1000 square feet of area. The compost must be spread evenly on top of the existing soil (approx. 1.5 inches deep) and then rototilled in to a depth of 6 to 8 inches.

For example: a 5000 square foot yard would require 20 cubic yards of compost.

$$\frac{5000}{1000} \times 4 = 20 \text{ cubic yards}$$

Additional lawn establishment benefits are attained by adding up to 6 cubic yards per 1000 square feet and/or adding super phosphate or triple super phosphate for root growth. Phosphate should be spread on top of compost immediately before tilling in to the soil.



The variance will be granted when all the criteria has been met. The variance must be posted near the building number. A variance is valid for 30 days and allows you to water outside of the watering restrictions. If you are watering to the point of run-off, you may be sited for waste and have your variance revoked. Please take down the variance when it expires.

**This information is available on the web at [www.greeleygov.com/waterconservation](http://www.greeleygov.com/waterconservation)**

