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Lawns for life.



Lawn
Hydromulching

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■ The Process

Hydromulching, sometimes referred to as hydroseeding, is a grass planting process.

The process is fast, efficient, and economical. This grass planting process is usually more effective than conventional seeding and certainly more economical than conventional turfing.

The process begins by mixing mulch, seed, fertilizer, and water in the tank of a hydromulching machine. The mixed material is then pumped from the tank and sprayed onto the ground.

Once applied to the soil, the material enhances initial growth by providing a micro-environment beneficial to seed germination.

If the area being planted is smooth and manicured, the resulting grass surface will be smooth and manicured. Golf greens are frequently planted with hydromulching resulting in a smooth surface.



■ The Results

Warm and moist conditions promote faster seed germination. Seed bed conditions determine growth rates after germination. When all the conditions are favourable, grass may require mowing and have excellent coverage in three to four weeks. During less favorable circumstances, a good stand of grass can take many months, or even up to a year, to become established.

■ The Mulch Material

Mulch products are usually produced from wood or recycled paper. A very specific fiber texture is particularly important in achieving an erosion resistant product which can also be easily pumped with a hydromulching machine. The mulch fiber is dyed green for aesthetics, but the colour is also important so that the thickness of application can be monitored.

■ The Value of Mulch

Mulch applied to the soil reduces moisture evaporation. Grass seed needs soil moisture to germinate and grow. Moisture must initially come from either irrigation or rainfall. Once the soil has moisture, mulch helps the seed get the most benefit from that moisture. Poor growth is almost always due to the seed and or the seedlings not getting enough moisture during certain critical times. Soil moisture is always important.

A good mulch application also provides erosion resistance. Soil erosion caused by flowing water is always a factor. Mulch helps hold soil in place and reduces the possibility that the seeds will be washed away, providing a better chance for establishing a more uniform coverage of grass. Further, when soil erosion is reduced, soil pollution of streams and other water bodies is reduced.

The mulch, with its fibrous network in the soil, can have significant benefits in reducing or preventing soil erosion and the strength of the mulch can be enhanced by using a tackifier. A tackifier is a glue for tying the mulch and soil together.

■ Hydromulching Has a Variety of Uses

New home lawns may be the largest single defined market for hydromulching. Other landscape applications are also significant. Hydromulching is being used more and more in new golf course construction. Each of these applications is usually irrigated, and the turf resulting from the application is usually classified as "fine turf". Turf Quality Results can be achieved almost every time when appropriate amounts of quality wood mulch and tackifiers are used.

New highway construction always needs new grass planted. Grass is frequently needed on mine sites, and reclamation of mine sites has increased with the recent concerns for the environment. Utility construction areas frequently need grass after pipe lines or power lines have been constructed. The list of places for planting grass in these "non turf quality" areas seems to be endless. Hydroseeding, utilising less mulch, is frequently used on these large areas to be more economical. Hydroseeding can work well on these "non-irrigated" areas, if the conditions are not too hot and dry.

■ Seeding, Hydroseeding or Premium Hydromulching?

Each method has its advantages and disadvantages:

SEEDING without the protection of mulch is less expensive than hydromulching.

HYDROSEEDING with little or no mulch can also be very cost effective. Broadcast seeding without mulch, or hydroseeding with little or no mulch may be the method of choice due to budget constraints. However, such processes are always subject to hit-and-miss results.

PREMIUM HYDROMULCHING can provide a full coverage of grass in three to four weeks, depending on conditions. The cost of premium hydromulching may be more than twice that of thin mulch hydroseeding. However, premium hydromulching is considerably less than the costs of solid turfing. Where Turf Quality Results are needed, and where good irrigation is available, premium hydromulching is by far the most logical and economical choice for establishing fine turf.

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