



THE Arbor-Nomics® BUGGETTE



Don't Believe These 4 Myths About Winter Lawn Care

If you're like many homeowners across metro Atlanta, you might think winter means it's time to take a break from lawn care. While that might be true in parts of the country with long, cold, snowy winters, it's not the case for Atlanta lawns. So let's set the record straight on four common myths about winter lawn care.



Everything is dormant in the winter, so there's nothing I need to do.

Yes, winter is a time of dormancy for grass and ornamental trees and shrubs, but that doesn't mean the plants have become completely inactive. It is just that much of the activity happens underground, where you cannot see it. So, just like during every other season, you still need to watch for signs of disease or damage due to insects or weather-related stresses.

There's no reason to mow in the winter.

Unless there's a lot of snow or long, deep-freezes – very unlikely in the South – your lawn continues to grow, just less quickly than in the warm seasons. Mowing during our typically mild winters can improve the appearance of your lawn. But be sure to raise the mower blade about a half-inch – the extra length helps dormant grass stay healthy.

Plants damaged by winter weather can't be revived.

An early frost or severe ice storm may leave you fearing that a tender sapling or a favorite ornamental is done for. Don't despair. Plants that are well-suited to growing in our climate are remarkably resilient so long as they have been receiving consistent and proper care.


Winter watering is prohibited.


Grass and ornamental trees and shrubs benefit from watering until the ground freezes. However, some municipalities in our area have banned winter watering. Check with your local government to see if watering is permitted. No matter where you live, be sure to drain your irrigation system ahead of freezing temperatures to prevent burst pipes.


St. Valentine's Day By the Numbers


Valentine's Day was originally a Christian feast honoring St. Valentine of Rome, but over time the day has become more associated with the tradition of courtly love that he represents. Here's a snapshot of the holiday in the U.S.

 **180 million** cards are exchanged on Valentine's Day, with women buying 85% of them.

 **73%** of all Valentine's Day flowers are bought by men.

 **8 billion** candy hearts with messages on them (aka conversation hearts) are made each year.

 **\$116.21** is the average Valentine's Day expenditure per person.

 **53%** of women say they would end their relationship if their partner didn't give them a gift for the holiday.

 **6 million** marriage proposals take place on February 14th.

Sources:

<https://tcagenda.com/2018/valentines-day-facts-traditions-superstitions-never-knew-may-want-try/>

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/holidays/valentines-day-ideas/a26863/valentines-day-facts/>

Join Arbor-Nomics! We are hiring Certified Landscape Specialists and Outside Sales Representatives. Visit Arbor-Nomics.com/JoinOurTeam for more information.

Bare in Mind

by Josh Bare



I always try to look on the bright side and see that even the largest cloud can still have a silver lining. Living through a global pandemic has been challenging, but one benefit many experienced was increased family time at home. When at home, a lot of time was spent reading, alone and to each other. Online book sales leaped, but people needed libraries, which were closing to slow the spread of the virus.

It's easy to take public institutions like libraries for granted, thinking they'll always be available no matter what.

My crew was especially excited about their first visits to the brand-new Norcross branch of the Gwinnett County Public Library, which opened its doors in October.

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Jan – Feb Lawn Care

Application #1 for all programs.

Please note: Weather conditions may force us to modify our treatments or our application schedule

LAWN TREATMENTS

Weed Control

All Programs. Your lawn received both a post-emergent and a pre-emergent weed treatment. The post-emergent targets existing broadleaf weeds, which will start to die off over the next two weeks. The pre-emergent deters grassy weeds, such as crabgrass, from emerging in the spring.

Fertilization

All Programs. Arbor-Nomics' Special Blend fertilizer was applied to Fescue lawns to nourish this cool-season grass, as well as to deter unwanted growth surges, which can make Fescue vulnerable to fungal diseases. Potassium was applied to Bermuda and Zoysia lawns to support a healthy root system over the winter and to feed these

warm-season grasses as they emerge from dormancy in the spring. We will do a second potassium treatment in Application #2.

Fungus Control

Silver Plus, Gold Plus & Platinum. Zoysia lawns were treated to control a common fungal disease known as Zoysia patch.

ORNAMENTAL TREE & SHRUB TREATMENTS

Pest Control

Gold, Gold Plus & Platinum. Ornamental trees and shrubs got a dormant oil treatment to prevent damage from insects that stay over-winter in these plants. The treatments applied in December and January provide winter-long protection.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO UNTIL OUR NEXT VISIT

Keep Lawns Free of Leaves

Heavy leaf litter increases the risk of lawn diseases by promoting excessive moisture, depriving grass of sufficient air and light, and reducing the efficacy of the treatments we apply. So, be sure not to let those leaves pile up.

Mow Warm-Season Grass the Right Way

Bermuda, Zoysia, or other warm-season grass will benefit if you raise your mower blade about a half-inch. The extra length enables the grass to store more nutrients for winter feeding. We also recommend leaving the grass clippings on the lawn. These will recycle back into the soil, providing another nutritional boost. Mowing after one of our treatments is fine so long as any wet applications have dried.

QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR SERVICE OR YOUR YARD?

If you have any questions concerning your lawn, ornamental trees, shrubs or our service, please call Customer Service, Monday – Friday, 8 am – 5 pm at 770.447.6037 or email us at info@arbor-nomics.com. If you call after hours, leave a message and we'll return your call the next business day.



We've Begun Scheduling Spring Aeration – Reserve Your Spot Now

The combination of winter frosts and Georgia clay leaves the soil dense and compacted, making it difficult for warm-season grasses to thrive. Aeration loosens up the soil, so that

- Air, water, and nutrients can easily penetrate and travel through the soil.
- Root systems can freely grow deeper and stronger.
- The fertilizers we apply can deliver optimal nutrition.

The result is thicker, greener, healthier turf.

We do all spring aerations during April and May only. Don't miss out on this essential service. Call us at 770.447.6037 to schedule your aeration today.

The 4 Most Important Questions to Ask When Looking for a Lawn Care Provider

Lawn care companies can vary widely in the services they offer and the amount of training their staff receives. So it's important to do your homework before picking a provider. Start by getting recommendations from friends and neighbors. Then get the answers from prospective providers to these important questions.



1) What Services Do You Offer?

Find out if they offer only basic services, like weed control and fertilization, or if they also treat for diseases and pest infestations, as well as provide lawn aeration and overseeding.

2) What Is the Frequency of Your Visits?

Treatments should be applied at least every two months throughout the year. At Arbor-Nomics, all our programs include seven visits a year, each one timed for the seasonal needs of Atlanta's lawns and ornamental trees and shrubs.

3) What Happens if I Notice a Problem Between Visits?

A fungal disease or pest infestation can quickly devastate turf or ornamentals. That's why Arbor-Nomics offers free service calls between visits whenever a customer notices something concerning.

4) What Training Do Your Technicians Receive?

Some companies provide as little as a few days or even hours of training. At Arbor-Nomics, every tech is a Certified Landscape Specialist (CLS) who has trained for four to six weeks before treating a customer's yard. All AN techs know how to handle pesticides safely and apply them correctly. Most of our CLSes hold a State Pesticide Certification; other companies may have only one or two certified techs on staff. We believe this level of training is essential for serving our customers effectively and safely.

To learn more about Arbor-Nomics' five program options or to request a FREE estimate, visit arbor-nomics.com.

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Taking Good Care of Our Customer Starts with Doing the Same for Our Employees

At a time when employers across a range of industries are struggling to staff their businesses, Arbor-Nomics is grateful for the stability – and loyalty – of our staff.

The reasons for the current labor shortage are complex. We believe, however, that the reasons for our stability are simple. **Two things have always been fundamental at Arbor-Nomics: Offer fair compensation and provide a work environment where employees can take ownership of their jobs and continue to grow.**

What does that mean for the Arbor-Nomics techs who take care of our customers' yards?

How we invest in our techs' satisfaction and growth:

- ✓ New hires train for four to six weeks to become Certified Landscape Specialists, not just spray technicians.
- ✓ All techs are trained in the safe, effective use of pesticides; most hold a state license in pesticide application.
- ✓ All techs receive ongoing education about turf and ornamental trees and shrubs.
- ✓ Each tech visits the same customers consistently, letting him really get to know the yards he treats and giving him ownership of his route.



You'd be hard-pressed to find many other lawn care companies that operate this way. But as we see it, doing right by our customers and by our employees are two sides of the same coin.

I remember my first introduction to the original Norcross branch many years ago. It was located at 116 Carlyle Street and was much smaller (approximately 3,200 square feet) than our new 22,000-square-foot building. A librarian showed us how to use the card catalog and the Dewey Decimal System to see which books the library had and where they were shelved. Checking out books involved taking them to the front counter, where a responsible adult stamped the due date on a card inside the front cover and kept a record of the books being borrowed. There were stiff repercussions for failing to return the books on time.



Gwinnett County Public Library Norcross Branch

All that has changed. Now you can do self-checkout, and students get a generous grace period so they can keep books as long as they need to. **And then there are all the modern amenities, like dozens of computer stations; learning labs for sewing, crafting, coding, etc.; 3D printing; game and study rooms; and a large community meeting room, among other features.**

My kids are so excited – they went five days in a row right after it opened – and it's not unusual for them, collectively, to have 40 books checked out at a time. (Imagine the late fines I'd pay if there weren't a student grace period!)

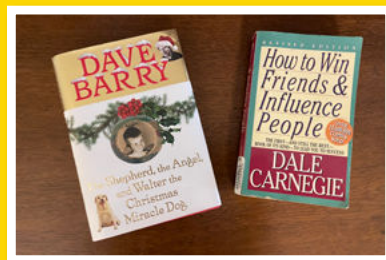
It's great to see their enthusiasm for the new facility and especially for books, something I hope stays with them throughout adulthood. I imagine I'm not alone when I say, as an adult and a parent, it's



become a struggle to get lost in a book. I guess distractions like browsing the web and watching videos require less effort, less commitment.

That's too bad because I've really enjoyed the all-too-few books I've read over recent years. **One of my favorite authors is Dave Barry, who wrote a humor column for the Miami Herald and whose columns have been compiled into books.** Mr. Barry has a quick wit and a quirky way of looking at things – reading his material is always time well spent. (I'm not sure I can say the same about the countless hours I've spent web browsing.)

Another favorite is Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends & Influence People*. Originally published in 1936, the book remains very relevant today and is a must-read for anyone in management. Many examples in the book are dated, but the principles of treating others with respect and consideration are timeless. We read it as part of our company meetings, and I think it has helped people professionally and personally.



One more oldie but goodie is *The Pushcart War* by Jean Merrill. The 1964 novel is, surprisingly, considered a children's book (albeit not a typical one). The story is based on the real-life battle between pushcart vendors in New York and the trucking companies that

sought to take over the roads and squeeze them out. While the story is very entertaining, there is a deeper message about fighting for what is right that will resonate with readers of any age.

The last one I'll mention is a bit of a cheat because I didn't actually read it – I did the next best thing and listened to it on tape. **The title is *Pendulum: How Past Generations Shape Our Present and Predict Our Future*.** I'm very intrigued by studying history to look for patterns and learn from what came before me. The authors, Michael Drew and Roy Williams, present a fascinating viewpoint on societal shifts that seem to happen in a predictable pattern and what those shifts mean for the future. If that topic interests you, *Pendulum* is definitely worth the read (or the listen).

In one of my many web browsing sessions, I came across a site that discussed the benefits of reading. Along with providing entertainment and information, it appears that reading can reduce stress. Folks who read regularly also report greater satisfaction with their lives than folks who don't. Who, today, wouldn't want less stress and more satisfaction?

I've talked a lot about the Norcross library here because it's new and in my home town, but great libraries can be found all over the state. Most sources say the Atlanta's Metropolitan Library has the biggest collection, and the Central Library downtown is nationally recognized as an architectural masterpiece. The Buckhead branch of the Fulton County Library is also on the list of Georgia's most beautiful libraries. If you're not sure what's happening at your local branch right now, why not check it out and visit if you can? It's a great time to be reminded of all that our public libraries have to offer.

Please let me know any thoughts you might have about this article. I can be reached at 678.313.4568 or Josh@Arbor-Nomics.com.