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# Aeration & Overseed Seed Establishment Care Guide

What to do after seed is installed

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## The Goal Is Moisture, Not Minutes

A sprinkler runtime does not tell us how much water reached the seedbed. Head type, hose diameter, water pressure, soil, slope, sunlight, wind, and temperature all change the result. Use the condition of the soil and young turf as your guide.

### Primary target

Keep the seedbed uniformly moist during germination - not saturated, puddled, or running off. If water begins to run off, shorten the cycle, allow it to soak in, and repeat only as needed.

### The day ranges are guideposts, not deadlines

Seed species, soil temperature, sunlight, weather, and site conditions can speed up or delay germination and establishment. Let turf development and moisture condition guide your decisions rather than the calendar alone.

## Stage 1 - Germination

### Approximately Days 0-14

**Water:** Begin irrigation immediately after installation. Use short, light cycles often enough that the upper seedbed does not dry out. Warm, sunny, or windy weather may require several watering events per day. Adjust frequency to actual moisture, not a fixed number of minutes.

**Traffic:** Essential access only. Keep routine foot traffic and pets off seeded areas as much as practical. An alternate pet restroom or exercise area is strongly recommended.

**Mowing:** Avoid mower traffic while the seedbed is soft and seedlings are too small to tolerate it. Do not mow simply because a certain number of days has passed.

**What to expect:** Emergence timing varies by seed type and temperature. If germination appears slow, first confirm the seedbed is staying moist before substantially increasing irrigation.

## Stage 2 - Early Establishment

### Approximately Days 15-30

**Water:** As roots develop, gradually lengthen the time between irrigation events and apply more water per event. Do not let young turf wilt or allow the active root zone to dry. Areas still germinating may need Stage 1 moisture.

**Traffic:** Continue to restrict traffic. Avoid repeated walking paths, dog runs, play, and turning or twisting equipment on the developing turf.

**First mowing:** Mow when seedlings are tall and anchored enough to tolerate it - not on a fixed day. Mow only when the soil is firm enough to avoid rutting, use a sharp blade, and remove no more than about one-third of the leaf blade.

**Timing:** Once seedlings are up, favor morning and early-day irrigation when practical so foliage is not held wet unnecessarily overnight.

## Rooting, Maturation & Normal Care

### Stage 3 - Rooting & Maturation

Approximately Days 30-45

**Water:** Transition toward deeper, less frequent irrigation. Allow the surface to begin drying between events while keeping moisture available deeper in the developing root zone. Early morning is preferred when practical. Avoid runoff and standing water.

**Watch for stress:** Blue-gray color, folded or curled leaves, and loss of normal leaf firmness can indicate drought stress. Respond with appropriate irrigation before young turf declines.

**Mowing:** Continue mowing as growth requires, following the one-third rule and avoiding turns or equipment movement that tears or dislodges juvenile turf.

**Traffic:** Light, cautious use may be possible, but repeated wear, pet runs, and twisting mower tires can still cause dieback.

### Stage 4 - Transition to Normal Care

Approximately Day 46+

**Water:** Move toward the deep-and-infrequent irrigation pattern appropriate for your turf species, soil, and current weather. Rainfall counts; irrigation should supplement what nature does not provide.

**Seasonal moisture:** Continue monitoring moisture through fall and winter. Newly established turf can still be injured by prolonged dry periods even when growth has slowed.

**Mowing & use:** Resume normal mowing and use gradually. The turf may look established before the root system has reached full maturity, so avoid unnecessary abuse.

## Call Us Before You Guess

Contact Newell Services if you see a condition that may require a change in the care plan, including:

- An irrigation failure or a clear coverage problem
- Seed washout, erosion, standing water, or repeated runoff
- No emergence beyond the expected window for the seed used on your project
- Widespread discoloration, matting, disease-like symptoms, or unusual decline
- An unexpected herbicide or pesticide application to the seeded area

### Results & client responsibilities

Seed is living material. Establishment depends on weather, soil conditions, prior treatments, seed-to-soil contact, irrigation, traffic, and other site conditions. Specific final turf results are not guaranteed. This guide supplements the accepted proposal, Scope of Work, and Newell Services Terms & Conditions; those documents control if there is a conflict.