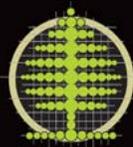


Going Organic— What's in it for You

A Community and Property Manager's Guide

8 Good Reasons to Switch to an Organic Program

- Safe for people, pets, and pollinators
- Scientifically correct
- Nature helps with maintenance
- Creates robust landscapes
- Conserves resources
- Costs less
- Plants grow more optimally
- It's the right choice!



**ENVIRONMENTAL
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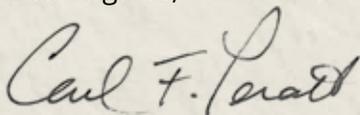
An Urgent Message from Fred:

We are all becoming increasingly concerned about the sprays, granules, and powders used to keep commercial properties and neighborhoods looking as good as they do. People are getting sick, many plant species are failing to thrive, and our rivers and streams are being destroyed by run-off. As a property or community manager, perhaps you've considered using more natural brands in some of the common areas, or maybe you've skipped a few applications to minimize the amount of toxic chemicals on your properties.

But to go completely organic? Is that even possible? And what does it really mean?

Simply put, an organic solution is comprised of all-natural fertilizers, insecticides, weed control, and tick/mosquito/gnat management. And yes, it's not only possible, but by adopting an organic program, you can create a healthier place for community members to live, work, and spend time together. We have created this eGuide, *Going Organic—What's In It for You: A Community and Property Manager's Guide*, to help you understand how a natural solution costs less, is easier to maintain, and is rapidly becoming the only choice for the times we are living in.

Best Regards,



Fred Peratt, President
Environmental Enhancements

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The Big Picture

The goal of an organic lawn care program is to create a balanced ecosystem that restores health and vigor to your landscape. Healthy soil offers a nutrient-rich environment for 'helpers' to thrive: earthworms that aerate the soil, extensive root systems that nourish plants, and adequate water absorption to support shrubs, trees, flowering plants, and turf. Native plants require less maintenance and attract butterflies, bees, and birds. Besides being welcome visitors to your property, these delicate creatures are beneficial pollinators that help proliferate foliage and make it easier (and less expensive) to maintain mature, beautiful landscapes year after year.

An organic solution is beautiful to look at, less expensive to maintain, and good for the planet. We don't see a downside! It's also important to note that we strongly feel all-natural tick, mosquito & gnat control are a critical part of an organic program. (Why cover your grounds with organic products only to spray the air with toxins?)



Now, Let's Get the Myths Out of the Way:

Organic solutions cost too much, take too long to work, and look sloppy. Who is perpetuating these myths? We don't know. But we CAN give you more accurate information.

"Organics are more expensive than chemicals."

Definitely not true. *Organic solutions cost less than synthetic programs because organic fertilizers are a more nutritious way to feed your lawns, trees, and garden beds.* This saves you money on replacing plants, watering, adding extra chemicals, and paying for additional landscaping services when your properties become depleted.

We also like to think of an investment in organic landscaping in broader terms. Synthetic programs have an associated cost we all pay for: contamination of fresh water supplies, destruction of critical fisheries, and a negative impact on human health, to name a few.

"Organics take too long to work."

A yard beleaguered by synthetic products tends to lose its natural ability to regenerate itself, so it may be a few years before a strictly-organic program 'takes.' To keep a property beautiful during the transition, we use 'soft' chemicals in combination with organics over a period of several years to control unwelcome species—such as crabgrass—and give the property time to regain its natural resiliency. The goal is to create a healthier landscape that will ultimately develop its own defenses, and over several years, we can wean the property off synthetic chemicals entirely.

"Chemical programs produce better results than organic."

One misconception about organic lawn care is that organic products are not as effective as their synthetic counterparts. Will common areas morph into unkempt patches of weeds if you 'go organic'? Will your grounds turn into a jungle? Years ago, maybe so, but not with today's products. All-natural lawn care solutions are more sophisticated than they used to be. They do a great job of keeping the outdoors both healthy *and* beautiful.

4 Key Components of an Organic Program:

Environmental Enhancements was an early adopter of 100% organic solutions. By now, we have been offering our clients all-natural lawn, garden, and pest control for quite a few years. We have experience in creating customized programs that yield beautiful, healthy results.

We consider 4 key areas when we develop organic solutions for our clients: **soil health, maintenance, water management, and nutrition.**

1

CREEPY CRAWLIES IN LOW PLACES

Just as a steady diet of fast foods jeopardizes an individual's health, synthetic fertilizers can make your soil sick. Soils are made up mostly of minerals, with space for air and water. How you care for and feed your soil affects soil structure, plant performance, and resident microbes.

A bit about microbes. **Astoundingly, when these little organisms are happily multiplying, they self-manufacture plant fertilizers, natural insecticides, and biological fungicides.** And if that's not enough, they also suppress weeds!

The high salt content of chemical fertilizers attacks and destroys microbes, which in turn compromises a plant's ability to develop a functional immune system. Then, because your plants are no longer healthy, they need yet another application of toxic chemicals to prop them up, a cycle that continues year after year.

So how do we encourage microbes to grow? With a robust diet of oxygen, carbon, and nutrient-rich minerals. When we begin an organic program on a new property, we almost always need to restore the soil's environment to one where microbes can thrive. Once we've established a thriving culture of microbes, we quickly see plant growth flourish and a natural tendency to conserve resources.

The organic approach recognizes that our soils need an infinite number of individual life forms called microorganisms.

We want large numbers of these guys in our soil:



BACTERIA



FUNGI



PROTOZOA



NEMATODES

Look at the contents contained in one teaspoon of healthy soil:

930,000,000 Bacteria

1 mile of Fungal Hypahae

100,000 Protozoa

500 Beneficial Nematodes

The vast majority of these life forms are good guys and the plants have a symbiotic relationship with them.



2

A PENNY SAVED

When a biological system is naturally healthy, fewer resources are needed to maintain the system. By using organic solutions, we invite mother nature to help maintain your property. (After all, she's the expert on this.) We know that organic landscaping offers many boosts to your maintenance programs that conventional chemicals do not:

- 1) Less water is used and doesn't get polluted as it seeps back into the water tables.
- 2) Plants are fed with the type of nutrition they were meant to have, which means optimizing health, beauty, and yields.
- 3) Plants grow more symmetrically, requiring less mowing and pruning.
- 4) Healthy plants require fewer pesticides.
- 5) No human or animal health issues are caused by organic exposure.
- 6) Fewer plants get sick, thereby reducing replacements.

Benefits to the environment aside, an organic ecosystem on your property will result in lower maintenance costs. By using organic products, we are able to take a system approach to treating your properties, which creates a healthy, interdependent relationship between plants, trees, pollinators, and human management.

3

DYING OF THIRST

One major benefit of 'going organic' is a significant reduction in water usage. **A synthetic program 'tightens' the soil (which reduces water infiltration), doesn't allow for water storage, and reduces root size.** Remember those microbes we talked about earlier? They help maintain spaciousness in the soil so water can move about freely, reaching all of the plant parts below ground and yielding a much larger, healthier root system. Take a look at the diagram below for a snapshot of how this works.

An irrigation system is not required for an organic program, but it helps. We are able to gauge the soil's infiltration rate and schedule water accordingly. While there is an upfront investment for installation, irrigation systems quickly pay for themselves and start saving you money each year.



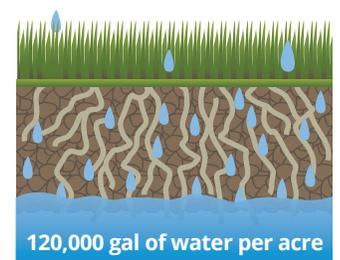
CHEMICAL SOIL

- Tight Soil
- Low Infiltration
- Low Stored Water
- Small Roots



ORGANIC SOIL

- Friable Soil
- High Infiltration
- More Stored Water
- Bigger Roots



SOIL AS YOUR WATER RESERVOIR

Soil with 3% Organic Matter
18" deep will hold 120,000 gal
of water per acre

4

FEED ME I'M YOURS

We like to use the word 'nutrition' in association with our organic programs because we are introducing healthful ingredients into your properties' biosystem. **We are basically 'feeding' the soil with organic fertilizer, microbe food sources, all-natural insecticides, pre-emergent, and weed control as dictated by your particular plant and topography configuration.**

What we find particularly exciting is that over time, the need for pesticides decreases significantly as plant immune systems become strong enough to resist disease on their own. Plus, many insect species are actually protective, and a natural solution targets only harmful pests without wiping out all living creatures within the application radius.

You Can Be the Change

We hope this guide has answered some of the questions you may have about 'going organic.' But switching to organics goes beyond process; adopting an organic program inspires a new way of thinking in communities. People are more inclined to spend time outside, get the kids off screens and into parks, cultivate a garden, enjoy common areas, mingle with colleagues outdoors, spend quiet time meditating on a bench, or have a neighborhood block party—without ticks, gnats, and mosquitos. By putting a focus on healthier living, neighbors will have an increased appreciation for how special their living, working, and shopping spaces really are—and how your efforts helped to make it that way.

We invite you to **contact us** to find out how we can customize an organic program for you. Your tenants, residents, customers, and visitors will love you for it.

“Adopting an organic program inspires a new way of thinking in communities.”



Why Going Organic Is Something We Have to Do:

Governments Say So:

Governments across the globe are expressing concern over the depletion of natural resources and enacting legislation to promote greener solutions.

Businesses Take the Lead:

Corporations recognize the environment has a huge value that can be monetized: clean air, clean water, clean soil, healthy fisheries, ozone protection, eco-tourism, the list goes on.

People Like It:

Millions of Americans identify as 'pro-environment' and are willing to pay to protect it.

It's Dangerous to NOT Go Organic:

Chemicals are known to poison people, cause cancer, and lead to a potential drop in brain function. And that's just the scary beginning.