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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 9-25-2014

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“Recharge Your Lawn Saturday” Sustainability Institute Promotes: Organic Lawncare Fall Overhaul

Labeling the last Saturday in September as: “*Recharge Your Lawn Saturday*,” the Sustainability Institute at Molloy College urges Long Island do-it-yourselfers to get out this weekend to kick-start an organic maintenance program with a “Fall Organic Overhaul” in order to boost the lawn’s performance next year.

“It is common for people to focus on lawns during the summer, but September and October is actually the best time to recharge your lawn by restoring nutrients and beneficial microbes that will give your lawn a boost next spring.” Said Neal Lewis, executive director of the Sustainability Institute at Molloy College which recently produced a educational series called: *12-Steps to an Organically Green Lawn*. “An organic fall overhaul is the ideal way to kick-start an organic lawn maintenance program. By setting aside one Saturday in the fall to complete up to 6 lawncare tasks (dethatch, aerate, fertilize, apply lime, compost and seed), your lawn will be ready to do much better next year,” he continued.

The Sustainability Institute is providing step-by-step advice on the College’s website and using social media to encourage home owners to stop using chemical pesticides that can contaminate Long Island’s underground drinking water supply. “We believe this program is easy to follow and will result in a green lawn that is safe for children and pets to play on while also not polluting Long Island’s drinking and surface waters,” Lewis continued.

Most lawns on Long Island have cool-season grasses, meaning they do most of their growing in the spring and fall. Therefore, the fall is when you will get the best results for your lawncare efforts. In the fall (during the months of September and October), the soil is still warm enough for the grass to grow, which is ideal for growing new grass and for getting the turf to take up nutrients. The fall provides several weeks before the first frost stops the growing season. Any time between Labor Day and Halloween is good for lawncare, but the last weekend in September is ideal because it gives enough time for existing turf to recover from dethatching and aeration (if needed), and for new seed to germinate and sufficiently grown in. Then, the grass will be able to take up nutrients from one last light fertilization applied before the end of October. This year, the last weekend of September is forecast to be warm and sunny, a great opportunity for Recharge Your Lawns Saturday to kick-start an organic maintenance program with a Fall Overhaul.

Note: State and county laws prohibit the application of nitrogen fertilizers in the winter (in Suffolk October 31 is the official deadline, in Nassau its November 15th, and the rest of New York State its December 1st). The general rule of thumb is that the annual Halloween holiday is a good marker to easily remember as the last time that nitrogen should be applied on Long Island lawns.

The Sustainability Institute provided an educational program *12-Steps to an Organically Green Lawn* this summer. <http://www.molloy.edu/about-molloy-college/community-and-institutes/the-sustainability-institute/12-steps-to-an-organic-lawn/supplement-3>

Using social media and web pages, the series provides information on best practices for 100% organic lawncare. Concerns about pesticides and water contamination are of great public interest for Long Islanders. Fortunately, it is possible to protect the environment and the health of your family while still being able to enjoy an organically green lawn.

Fall Overhaul 6 Tasks for Recharge Your Lawn Saturday include:

- Detaching
- Core-aeration
- Amend pH with lime
- Top dress with compost
- Fertilize with organic fertilizer
- Seeding

Fall is a Great Time to Start Organic Lawn Care

Would you like to see your lawn do better next year?

Can you devote a day this fall to implementing the Organic Lawncare Fundamentals?

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