

INTRODUCING "GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS"

We are all very fortunate to call Forest Creek home. But, Forest Creek is more than just a place to live; it is a vibrant community brimming with family-friendly neighborhoods, chock-full of fascinating, talented people. Our variety is what makes us so both unique and extraordinary. However, sometimes, we get so busy, we lose sight of how interesting and diverse we've become.

We believe that getting to know the people who live nearby will help us create a sense of belonging and shared identity. We have created a column entitled, "Get to Know Your Neighbors" which we hope will strengthen connections, build trust in our wider community, and contribute to a happier neighborhood for everyone.

If you know of a person or a family that you believe is making Forest Creek a better place to live, please let us know. We would like to introduce them to your neighbors.



The Forum

NEWSLETTER INFO

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ROUND ROCK NEW NEIGHBORS

Round Rock New Neighbors is a non-profit social club for women with over 180 members from Round Rock and surrounding communities. Since 1978, RRNN has been active in providing women the opportunities to come together and meet new friends and neighbors. The name may fool you, but you do not have to be new to the area to join the fun. We have new members who have lived in Round Rock for many years. All women are welcome!

You are cordially invited to attend one of our monthly luncheons and coffees.

To find out more about these events and who to contact, please visit our website at www.rnewneighbors.org

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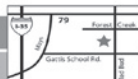
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AERATION NOW CAN HELP YOUR SPRING AND SUMMER IRRIGATION

In order to prepare your lawn for a healthy spring growing season, you should employ basic lawn care practices at this time of year, which includes aerating your yard. It is important that nutrients reach the soil beneath your grass, and aeration can help you get that done.

Aeration involves making small holes in the soil to allow air, water and nutrients to get to the grass roots.

This helps the roots grow deeper and produce a stronger, more vibrant lawn.

Aerating helps alleviate soil compaction. Compacted soils have too many solid particles in a space, which prevents proper circulation of air, water and nutrients within the soil. Excess lawn thatch or heavy organic debris buried under the grass surface can also starve the roots from these essential elements.

So when is the right time to get this aeration done? These next six to eight weeks leading up to the spring season, when grass begins to grow again, is a good time to aerate.

The two main aeration tools are the spike aerator and a plug aerator. The spike aerator poke holes in the ground with a solid piece of metal.

Plug aerators remove a core or plug of grass and soil from the lawn. Most landscaping companies and horticulturists recommend the use of the plug aerator. The machines can be rented or you can have a lawn care service aerate for you. After aerating, it's always a good idea to apply about a half-inch of compost over the aerated yard. The compost fills in the holes left by the plug aerator and brings organic materials into the root zone.

If you have noticed that your turfgrass isn't looking its best or that water has difficulty penetrating through the soil surface, it may be time to aerate your lawn. Lawns with clay soils that get a lot of foot traffic typically require aeration more often as they become compacted over time. Here's a great tip to check to see if your yard needs to be aerated.

Using a shovel, dig a square-foot section of grass about six inches deep and take a look at it. If the grass roots don't extend further than two inches deep into the soil, your lawn would benefit from aeration.

If you plan to aerate your own yard, here are a few helpful tips to get the job done.

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Forest Creek Animal Hospital

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- Before you get started, make sure the soil is moist enough. There's nothing more frustrating than trying to aerate soil that is bone dry. Aerating the day after a rain shower or watering your lawn the day before is advised.
- Most aeration machines cover only a small percentage of soil surface per pass, so make multiple passes over the most compacted areas. Save resources (and your energy) by leaving unaffected areas alone.
- The soil plugs can be left on the ground after aeration and allowed to decompose. Or, you can rake them into piles to throw in the compost bin. However, this isn't necessary as it should take about two to four weeks for the soil cores to break down naturally. Sprinkle compost (sand or peat moss can be used instead of compost) over the lawn to fill in the holes.
- An aeration myth is that if you apply a pre-emergent herbicide on your lawn in the spring, aerating your lawn will destroy the herbicide "barrier." This is not true — research shows that aeration will not affect crabgrass control or weed prevention.

After aerating, it's important to continue appropriate lawn care practices.

Aerating will help you save water over the spring and summer seasons. Instead of running off or only penetrating a few inches, water will be better absorbed in an aerated yard. That makes your entire landscape and your water bill happier.

Did you know...

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, outdoor water use varies greatly depending upon geographic location. In dry climates such as that in the Trinity Glen Rose District, a household's outdoor water use can be as high as 60 percent. Some experts estimate that as much as 50% of that irrigation water is wasted due to inefficient watering techniques, wind and evaporation.



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MARCH GARDENING TO DO LIST

Plant: ornamental & wildlife

- Annuals: It's a tricky month for annuals since we get hot days. But the soil is still cold and freezes could still arrive. Late: plant cosmos, sunflowers, morning glory, gomphrena but keep an eye on upcoming freezes. Avoid planting caladiums.
- Wildflower transplants: early in month, you can still plant bluebonnet, larkspur, poppy and other transplants.
- Perennials & vines
- Ornamental (clumping) grasses like muhly and Mexican feather grass (late month)
- Trees, shrubs, roses (as soon as possible before heat sets in)

Plant: herbs

- Nasturtiums, chives, catnip, comfrey, fennel, horseradish, feverfew, oregano, thyme, rosemary, Mexican mint marigold, peppermint, lemongrass (after last freeze)

Prune

- Roses (early)
- Evergreen shrubs
- Prune dormant perennials and ornamental (clumping) grasses.
- Trees: DO NOT prune red oaks and live oaks unless damaged. Spray immediately with clear varnish.
- No need to apply pruning paint to other trees
- Avoid topping crape myrtles: simply remove sprouts or entire limbs at the trunk.

Divide/Move

- Dormant perennials, roses, shrubs and trees. Still time, but don't wait!

Fertilize

- Citrus with high nitrogen fertilizer like Citrus-tone. Fertilize every few weeks through growing season.
- Add compost to beds as you cut back dormant perennials. Fertilize with slow-release granular late in the month or as dormant perennials leaf out
- Add compost around trees and fertilize. Be sure to dig out grass several feet from the trunk, ideally to the drip line of the tree canopy.
- Watch for powdery mildew. Apply a natural fungicide like Serenade.

Lawn

- Mow weeds before they set seed. Do not fertilize at this time except with compost!
- Plant other turf late in month once freezes aren't coming

Prep

- Add compost to vegetable gardens along with organic fertilizer in prep for more summer crops
- Soil test

Other tasks

- Keep floating row cover available; avoid covering plants with plastic
- Mulch, but avoid touching the base of trees and roses
- WEED!

Tips

- When planting, dig hole twice as wide as root ball but no deeper than where it sits in the pot.
- Backfill and water until it sinks in.
- Continue filling in.
- Water again until it sinks in and pack the soil down.
- Mulch.

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The Forum

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Meet Chasity, 11, she is waiting for a forever family. Chasity is a sweet and kind young girl. She is somewhat shy but likes being around others. She is very comfortable around those who are caring and affectionate toward her. She is very polite and will use 'please', 'thank you', and 'sorry'. Chasity greatly enjoys being outdoors, and she especially likes going to the water park. She loves coloring and showing off her work. Chasity has development,

emotional, and learning disabilities and receives special education services. She loves praise and likes to let everyone around know when she is able to accomplish a task. She is working on becoming more independent and pushes towards doing things on her own.

The Heart Gallery of Central Texas, a program of Partnerships for Children, features portraits of Central Texas children in the foster care system who are available for adoption. Working together, our community raises awareness around adoption, foster care and permanency.

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