



# Phipps' Tips for Hiring a Green Lawn Care Co.

Utilize this document when hiring a lawn care provider to make sure that you are receiving top-notch service that is healthy for you, your family and our environment.

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Lawn Care Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Lawn Care Professional Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes No

**I have attended Phipps' Organic Lawn Care course.**

Landscapers who have attended this Phipps training are familiar with many aspects of healthy landscaping. You can find the complete list of course graduates here: [www.PhippsSafeLawn.org](http://www.PhippsSafeLawn.org)

Yes  No

**I will not use any pesticide without owner's approval beforehand.**

With patience, many pest populations are kept in check by natural predators. Pesticides may kill these beneficial predators, pollute our environment, and can be dangerous to human health.

Yes  No

**I will only use targeted organic pesticides with prior approval by owner.**

While organically approved pesticides are generally safer than their non-organic counterparts – they still need to be used with caution. Have your landscaper explain the risks associated with any pesticide application, and restrict use to targeted pests in targeted areas.

Yes  No

**I will not use inorganic 'weed and feed' or any other broadcast treatment that contains an inorganic fertilizer, herbicide or insecticide.**

Using broadcast inorganic weed and feed applications puts synthetic fertilizer and potential toxins onto your lawn where you, your children and your pets play. This may pose potential health threats to your family, and to stream life when rain washes these chemicals into our waterways.

Yes  No

**I will mow your grass high to promote the health of your lawn.**

Lawns are healthier, more drought resistant, and less prone to weeds when they are mowed higher (typically 3 – 3 1/2 inches). The only exception is the first and the last cut of the year, when grass should be mowed lower (typically 2 inches). Ideal heights vary by grass species.

Yes  No

**I will perform a soil test.**

Soil tests are inexpensive and can tell you a lot about your soil. Pay particular attention to the test's recommended amendments, the pH, and the level of organic matter. Keep a copy for yourself for reference.

Yes  No

**I will not control for grubs unless I certify that there is a problem.**

Most people don't know that anything less than 8-10 grubs per square foot is typically not a problem, and should be left alone.

Yes  No

**I will work to keep your lawn healthy through routine, cultural practices.**

Practices like dethatching, aeration, top-dressing with high-quality compost and correction of poor drainage can go a long way towards avoiding common lawn problems.

Yes  No

**I will only use fertilizers that are organic and only as much as actually needed.**

Organic fertilizers (e.g. cottonseed meal, alfalfa meal, soybean meal, etc.) tend to break down slowly in the soil, providing a steady source of nutrients. Synthetic fertilizers tend to be quick acting. Excess fertilizers, especially nitrogen, run off into our waterways—leaving the soil depleted and our bodies of water with nitrogen overloads.

Yes  No

**I will mulch your grass clippings back into your lawn.**

Mulching grass clippings back into your lawn can provide up to 50% of a lawn's nitrogen needs. It also reduces the amount of time spent raking and bagging. Using a mulching mower DOES NOT contribute to the build-up of thatch.

Yes  No

**I will top-dress annually with high-quality compost or mushroom manure.**

A 1/4 inch annual top dressing of quality, finely screened compost or mushroom manure is a great way to improve your lawn's organic matter and add nutrients.

Yes  No

Lawn Care Provider Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Client Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_