Top maintenance lawncare practices to focus on in early spring in Ohio during the Covid-19 outbreak.

1. Communicate with clientele so that everyone is aware of the reduced maintenance practices and how that may affect aesthetics.

2. Ensure all staff are carrying appropriate documentation for travel etc.

3. Mowing – southern & central parts of the state have started mowing. Northern parts of Ohio currently have limited growth. Essential maintenance should focus on priority areas. Mowing heights should be raised to the maximum height for that turf species (generally 3-4”) to reduce stress on turf. Mowing can then be reduced to 1x per week or less.

4. Make sure fuel tanks & containers are full, so there’s adequate fuel for operations once restrictions are lifted.

5. Avoid quick-release sources of nitrogen that will increase growth & therefore mowing frequency. Apply fertilizers that are at least 30-50% slow release. On high cut turf, this application could be delayed until May.

6. Keep facilities safe: Lock tools away, etc.

7. Preemergence herbicide applications should be made based on GDD tracker recommendations for the specific pests, mainly crabgrass, only on areas that have had this problem in the past.

8. If there is adequate rain, shut the irrigation system off. This is particularly important if no one is on site to notice breaks/leaks etc. It also slows excessive turf growth.

9. Clean up should only occur where drains need to be cleared to reduce potential issues with flooding.

Refer to Ohio Turfgrass Foundation and Ohio Lawncare Association website for more pertinent documentation regarding benefits of turf, authorization to travel etc., for further information.