

May is the best time to apply a nitrogen fertilizer to the lawn in southern Illinois. Fertilizing too early can stimulate excessive shoot growth at the expense of root growth. This excessive early leaf growth is more favorable for disease problems.

The homeowner usually applies nitrogen to the lawn early because they want early spring green-up of the lawn. This early spring green-up can be obtained by applying a winterizer application of fertilizer to the lawn in November. Be sure the nitrogen source is slow release.