

Why lime?

Here in New England, our soil tends to be fairly acidic. Overly acidic soil is not a good condition to grow grass in, so it becomes very important to keep track of just how acidic your soil is and to apply lime accordingly. Lime is a calcium rich mineral that, when pulverized, can be used to make your soil more basic—that is, increase the pH of the soil.

What is pH?

pH is a way of measuring the acidity of a given substance, measured on a scale from 1 to 14—1 being extremely acidic, 14 being extremely basic, and 7 being neutral. Most plants actually prefer a slightly acidic soil, so you should be aiming to have a pH of between 6 and 7.

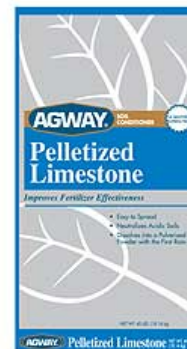
So how do I find out the pH of my soil?

Test kits are sold as a do-it-yourself way to learn what the pH of your soil is; alternatively, you can send a soil sample to a company who will analyze it for you, giving you information such as pH and also what kind of fertilizer would be best for your lawn based on how much of which nutrients it contains.

I know the pH of my soil, now what?

Once you have discovered if your soil is acidic, you will want to purchase your lime. There is a lot of technical discussion involved in how much lime you will need to get your soil to the proper pH; this amount depends on two things: how acidic your soil is and something called the cation exchange capacity (CEC) of your soil. If you send a soil sample to a soil-analyzing group, they will be able to determine the CEC of your soil and, therefore, the amount of lime you will need.

The bagged lime that we sell at Benedict's comes in three forms: pelletized, granular, and ground (or pulverized). Pelletized is great for use in a broadcast spreader, and releases into the soil more slowly. Granular and ground are faster-acting, and can be messy when used with a broadcast spreader, so it would be better to use a drop spreader to spread these.



So what does moss have to do with this?

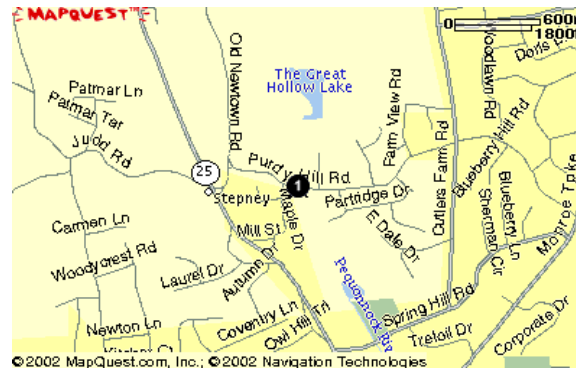
One major problem that usually occurs in acidic soil is the growing of moss, which grows well in damp, shady areas and where the soil is acidic. There are products specifically for killing moss, such as Scott's Moss Control granules. When applied, the moss will turn black after a few days, at which point you must rake it up to remove it. However, if you have moss in your yard, you can apply lime to the area in order to raise the pH of the soil, thus making it uninhabitable for the moss. If you have no moss, but have acidic soil, applying lime to raise the pH is also a good way of preventing moss from growing.



Notes

Benedict's Tips:

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Liming and Moss Control



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