

Dog Damage

"Dog Urine lawn spotting" is the most common problem. Dog urine concentrated over a small lawn area can make the top-soil toxic for extended periods of time for growing grass. You will have to under till the top soil or, better still, replace it with fresh top soil. Dog urine is a mild fertiliser with a nitrogen source as a salt called urea. As an isolated salt, urea itself is very high in nitrogen and can make an excellent fertiliser for the lawn and gardens when carefully applied to the grass and top soil. If you are able to simply hose down the areas before the urea can burn the grass foliage or have its concentrated effects in the top soil, it is actually a good fertiliser and if the rest of the lawn is well fertilised, you will not see any negative effects or spotting. If the dog is kept away from a urine damaged area, time, rain and watering will fix it as all the microbes in the root zone work to biodegrade the urine/salts and re-establish a normal soil ecology.

There are sprays you can find at pet centers which supposedly attract dogs to a specific area so spottings due to salting effects are less of a problem. Some people have good results training especially the younger dogs to use certain areas to relieve themselves. Encourage or train your dog to go where you prefer with attractant sprays and rewards, or else keep the spots immediately flushed with diluting water are the best remedies for your lawn spotting problem.

Although there are **NO PET-PROOF GRASSES** available, some grasses are considerably better than others for a dog's domain. The best lawns for dogs are those grasses that spread by either stolons or rhizomes (usually these are for warm climates). During the early Autumn, you may consider over seeding these lawns with perennial rye grasses (*Lolium specie*) for improved durability during the cooler months. Tall Fescues are also more resistant to hypertonic effects than other grasses. These grasses are not absolutely urea resistant, just more so than other grass choices.