

## Recent Cold Weather Effects on Missouri Turfgrasses Brad Fresenburg

Cool-season turfgrasses, such as Ky. bluegrass, tall fescue and perennial ryegrass will tolerate the recent cold snap experienced during the Easter weekend. Even those cool-season grasses seeded this spring should still be OK after the historical lows. The only caution that should be taken with all turfgrasses is the avoidance of foot and wheel traffic over frosted or frozen lawns. This will damage leaf tissue and produce brown foot or wheel marks as leaf tissue turns dark green to almost black in appearance, and then brown (Figure 1). Turfgrasses do recover from this damage, but delays in green up could take several weeks. It is safe to walk or drive over frosted/frozen lawns after they have thawed with the morning sun. Mowing may resume after the frost burns off and leaf tissue has dried.



Figure 1. Wheel mark damage from driving on frosted/frozen turfgrass.

Warm-season grasses, such as zoysiagrass, were just beginning to green up and will be held back with the recent cold temperatures. Homeowners may even witness some dormant-like colors (yellowing to brown) again. These grasses will only be delayed in green up and should anticipate zoysiagrass to fully green up by late April to early May.

Bermudagrasses have not begun to green up in the central part of the state, however in the southern third, sports turf managers will notice some lost of leaf tissue delaying green up as well. Bermudagrass typically follows zoysiagrass in spring green up and we should expect bermuda to green up by mid to late May this year. Many areas of the state are still questionable for bermudagrass winter injury due to the extended snow/ice cover we experienced for five to six weeks this winter. Only time will tell the extent of winter damage on our bermudagrasses across the state.