



QUALITY FIRST
Lawn & Shrub Care



QUALITY FIRST
Home Services

Owned & Operated by
Jeff & Debra Melmer

10 plants that are natural mosquito repellents:

Citronella

Citronella Grass

Lemon Balm

Marigolds

Catnip

Lavender

Lemon Verbena

**Creeping Lemon
Thyme**

Basil

Rosemary

**Most Herbs are
natural Mosquito
repellents**

“THE ONLY THING THAT IS CONSTANT IS CHANGE”

– Heraclitus

As with all business, change is the only constant and at Quality First we are always looking towards our future. As this is a highly competitive market, we have to work harder to stay ahead of our competition and service is what truly separates *us* from *them*. With that in mind, we have some exciting news at Quality First Lawn & Shrub and Quality First Home Services.

As part of our 5 year plan, we knew that at some point we needed an individual that can and will help our organization grow to the next level. As part of our philosophy, we only want to grow with what we can keep up with; this ensures our ability to continue to deliver the highest level of service in our area. That means hiring the right individuals to help complete our team of highly trained service technicians or service consultants as we prefer to call them.

With all that being said, I would like to introduce our new Director of Operations, Lynn Briggs. Lynn brings with him almost 30 years of experience in our industry. Lynn and I started together at Middleton back in the late 1980's. As we both grew in our respective roles at Middleton as lawn technicians, we eventually moved into management and our professional paths somewhat parted. I continued to grow and develop as a lawn and shrub care specialist and Lynn as a pest control and termite specialist. Eventually, I ventured on my own to start Quality First Lawn & Shrub Care and Lynn moved up into upper management at Middleton...Fast forward to today; Lynn will head up our indoor pest control and termite division. Over time Lynn will greatly enhance our office's ability to continue to grow their abilities to ensure the highest level of customer service is provided for all of our great customers. Our goal is to provide you with a great service experience from the time your call is answered at our office to our technicians communicating and resolving any issue(s) that have developed; whether it be indoor or lawn & shrub related issues. Also look for upcoming improvements to our websites: working to improve information for services offered and results of special programs.

This will be the constant and the standard set by our organization for you “the customer” and as many of you are aware, we are a family run business. Jeff, Deb, our son Jessie, My brother Mike, his wife Kelly, Loretta and her sister Charlene and now Lynn is bringing with him his daughter Emily, he will be training her to become our indoor pest control specialist.

As with any change, sometimes news is good and sometimes news is bad. For those of you who do not yet know, Tom Boyd is no longer with our organization; it was an unfortunate parting, but a necessity. With that said, the good news is Kerry, who left us for a short time, has re-joined our staff and we welcome him back with open arms! Welcome back Kerry!

With these recent changes occurring, explaining the reasons to customers is difficult and challenging. Having to say “I am not sure” or “can you wait until next week” was one of the hardest things I have had to do. The one thing that I seem to hear over and over is *trust*. “We trust you, Jeff”; in my mind that is one of the highest praises I could ever imagine hearing from a customer. It is a word we seem to hear a lot and I hope you all take this as my sincerest and most appreciative **Thank You!** Thank you all for your ongoing trust and patronage of all of our services...**Thank you!**

TURF

St. Augustine

Mowing height is one of the most important factors for a dense, healthy St. Augustine lawn. The leaf blade is what gives us our color and photosynthesis produces food for the plant. Full sun St. Augustine should be cut at 3½" during this time of year, by the time you get to July, August and September, you may be up to 4 - 4½" depending on your grass. For shaded properties, this becomes even more important as in the shade/reduced sunlight, the more leaf blade the healthier the turf. St. Augustine in the shade can be as low as 2½" depending on the variety of St. Augustine, but will perform better at about 3".



Scalping St. Augustine creates a great deal of stress on our turf; please remember to check that mowing heights are adjusted as needed.

After our Spring feeding our St. Augustine turf took off!...giving us a beautiful green, lush appearance; we should be able to maintain this throughout the Summer, as all conditions are ideal. Heat stress, drought stress, excessive rain, traffic and scalping can all lead to poor performing turf.

Zoysia

Very slow to come off the Winter dormancy. At this point in time you should be mowing at about 1 - 1½". Maintain Zoysia at this height throughout the next couple of months. By the time we reach August, you may be cutting at 2 - 2½", maximum height would be 2½" for best appearance. Many factors affect Zoysia performance, similar to St. Augustine, with the exception of mowing; the shorter the Zoysia the better it typically looks.



SERVICE

During the past two months we have been applying the Spring feeding of your turf and shrubs; this is an especially difficult time of year as granular fertilizing is a physically demanding job. However the results are very rewarding and these applications are the springboard for the upcoming year; a strong and healthy plant is typically a happy plant.

*But, as Summer and the rainy season approach, so comes **bug season...***

May has now become the beginning of Sod Web Worm season, although we have been finding Sod Web Worm during April as well. Your next turf application includes our Sod Web Worm prevention treatment and if last year's results are an indicator; which is very little to no Sod Web Worm damage to our turf, this year we expect the same. It was the quietest Summer I have ever encountered in my almost 30 year career. It is also the beginning of Chinch Bug season. From now until late October our technicians are extremely conscientious to ensure Chinch Bugs are managed or controlled so turf damage will not be evident. If Chinch Bugs are found on your property, treatment is made and followed up on to ensure control.

The rainy season typically makes our turf look great, but is also fuel for weed growth. We work diligently day in and day out to control weeds in your turf, on occasion weeds get ahead of us; especially during rainy periods. Our technicians note these problems and follow ups are set to ensure weed control is achieved and continued to be monitored throughout the rainy season.



**SCHOOL'S OUT...
WATCH OUT FOR CHILDREN!**

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SHRUB CARE

As with most of our conversations, we typically discuss over trimming of our shrubs. While it is a good idea to keep shrubs trimmed and not let them get out of bounds, timely trimming maintains an exact appearance. Frequency in trimming, in some cases weekly, you trim off soft tissue; which is better for the plant and the equipment and it is also less debris to clean-up. Less frequent trimming, every 2 - 3 weeks or monthly, depending on your location, is a lot less stressful for the plant. It may also affect overall appearance; hand clipping is best. The thicker stem can allow you to be more selective in what gets cut; the cleaner the cut, the better the healing process for the plant.

A lot of our trees and shrubs are beginning and ending their blooming cycles. It sure is enjoyable to see blooming trees and shrubs. Throughout the year, good plant selection and placement greatly enhance blooming trees and shrubs throughout the year. As we sit back and enjoy our landscape, we are awash in color throughout the seasons.

Plants to look for blooming this time of year are:

Gardenias	Roses
Oleander	Confederate Jasmine
Bougainvillea	Lantana
Ixora	Alamanda
Society Garlic	Honeysuckles
Pineapple Guava	Ruellia
Pinwheel Jasmine	Plumbago
Australian Fire Bush	Fire Cracker Plant
Crotons - always colorful!	

Trees to look for blooming this time of year are:

Mimosa	Tipuana
Jacaranda	Magnolia
Silk Floss	Crepe Myrtle
Royal Poinciana	Bottle Brush

Remember, good cultural practices are what allow us to maintain strong, healthy plants, along with water, sun, shade and fertilizer and proper plant selection for site, proper installation and trimming are all factors involved in the overall health and vigor of your landscape.

Dear valued customers of Quality First,

Please allow me to introduce myself, my name is Lynn Briggs, and I began my pest control career in 1987. At that time I was a lawn technician with Jeff Melmer at Middleton Lawn & Pest Control. I spent 21 years with that company and that time laid the foundation of my industry knowledge; when that company was sold, I went to work for an extremely large national company. Where I was a Division Service Manager covering lawn, shrub, pest and termite control at 75 branches, covering 3 states, servicing both commercial and residential customers.

The Melmers' and I have remained very close friends since 1987, which led to Jeff and I deciding it was time for me to join his team; I officially began my career at Quality First on April 13, 2015. I am certified in lawn, pest and termite control by the State of Florida, am also a member of the Entomology Society of America and have completed the studies required to be an Associate Certified Entomologist (A.C.E.).

I will be providing pest control and termite services through Quality First Home Services. Where over the next few years we will be expanding our offerings to our customers ensuring that you will be able to count on us for any of your pest control related issues. We also provide a termite protection plan using Termidor "the #1 termiticide in the world" and *we back it with a repair guarantee.*

As the weather heats up and the rain begins to fall, we begin the season where all these crawling pests will begin to threaten your home, health and quality of life. With just 1 phone call we can get to your property and provide a complete analysis at no charge. If pest control is required, we will develop a program specific to your home and your needs.

Thank you for your time and your continued patronage of Quality First.

Lynn Briggs, A.C.E.



Lynn Briggs was recognized for his quarter century of contributions to the pest management profession. At a dinner on in Orlando, association members from several companies gathered as "Friends of PFMA" to thank Lynn for his service to the profession and roles he has played in the successes of the companies with which has been associated.

EMAIL THE EDITOR ~ Do you have a question or comment you would like addressed in an upcoming newsletter?
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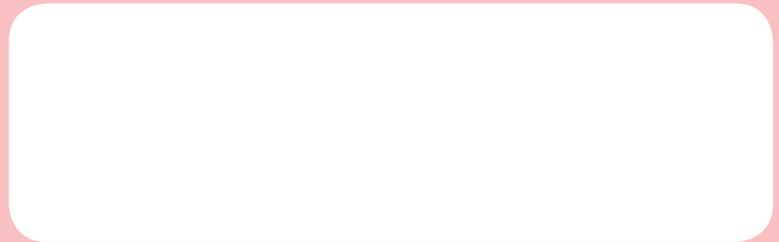
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WATER...

A CRUCIAL ELEMENT IN SURVIVAL FOR US AS WELL AS OUR PLANTS.

We all need water to survive. The question is how much? How frequent? Temperature always plays a role in answering these questions. There is no secret formula to this age old question. It depends on you and your landscape requirements. Many factors always come into play, but will be completely different for each landscape.

Again, water restriction is a key component in creating your own formula. Survey your landscape; shaded and low areas require less water per application, whereas full sun areas will always require more and in some situations, frequency is your best approach.

Without rain in the forecast, our irrigation systems are working overtime. But I still have dry spots or brown grass? This may easily be corrected by supplementing these areas, maybe 15-20 minutes gets us through to our next scheduled irrigation day.

It is also a good time to check our zone run times. Stationary sprays should be set at 30 minutes; rotors should be upwards to 60 minutes. These times may vary based on your landscape needs, on average this is good formula to follow.

Rainfall will also play a key role in our formula. Rainfall can be deceiving! In late April we had a 3-4 hour drizzling rain, which seemed to a lot; it wasn't, it rained $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Duration is good for soaking but it also needs to have an accumulation of $\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ " in order to shut down our irrigation systems. Use these rain events as supplements. It is always better to be a little bit ahead then to be in a deficit.

Monitor the weather along with a rain gauge; this will be yet another component to our formula. It does not rain the same amount everywhere. We had a week in April of almost 10" while other areas had 1"-2" that same week.

I hope this helps in trying to figure out how much water is enough. As always, if you have any questions, please call and we will offer as much assistance as possible to meet your needs.