

What causes soil pH to change? There are a couple of factors fertilizer itself releases Hydrogen as it is broken down, which in turn puts more Hydrogen in the soil this process causes an increase in acidity. Acid rain is another factor that lowers soil pH as well as rain itself which washes away valuable Calcium. This increase in soil acidity prevents nutrients to lawn grasses which hinders growth and allows other plants, that can survive in these conditions to flourish and strangle out grasses.

Fall and spring are the best times to apply lime, because it takes about 60-90 days for lime to alter the soil's pH. When purchasing lime remember the finer the liming material the quicker it activates which brings about a change in pH sooner. Application in the fall does have some advantage over spring application, the biggest factors are increased rain and snow fall coupled with cycles of freezing and thawing all of which aid in a faster breakdown of the liming material. How does one determine how much lime to apply? As mentioned before the best practice is to make use of a soil test provided through the Mitchell County Extension Office. The sample is mailed by the homeowner to the Soil Science Dept. at NCSU and reports are sent to Extension personnel and the homeowner with the recommended rate of application. Stay Safe and get busy liming.