

The grass is always greener ... when it's synthetic

Murphy man sows idea that fake lawns could save water

By Billi Gray

How many home owners reap frustration from the lawns they seeded with the hope of a pleasant yard?

Grass lawns need continual maintenance — watering, weeding, mowing, trimming, fertilizing and reseeding. You can't just sit back and watch the grass grow.

If you do your yard work yourself, it costs time. If you hire a lawn service, it costs money. And any way you care for a lawn, it will need plenty of water.

With persisting drought conditions, many yards will be thirsting more than usual in the Texas heat this summer.

The City of Murphy is operating under Stage 2 of its drought contingency plan due to the precipitation shortfall the area has been experiencing for several months. The city has asked residents to limit yard watering to two days per week at this stage.

The North Texas Municipal Water District has initiated Stage 3 of its drought contingency plan due to continued precipitation shortages, increased water usage and forecasts of continued drought conditions. The district's Stage 3 restrictions limit landscape watering to one day per week. The district, which sells water to Murphy,

See ADEFOPE page 3A



Photos by Billi Gray

'Replicated grass' - Can you tell?



Synthetic grass options have expanded far beyond AstroTurf. Top: Synthetic samples of thin, thick and medium widths of grass. Bottom: Synthetic grass is ever-green compared to sun-baked sod.

Thursday, May 25, 2006 - MURPHY MONITOR - Section A - Page 3

Local

Adefope sees 'replicated grass' as one solution to water shortage



Joseph Adefope of Murphy sells synthetic grass. He says his business interest in propagating the unnatural ground cover grows out of his personal interest in having synthetic grass around his own home. 'It conserves a lot of water,' he said. Murphy ordinances prohibit synthetic lawns, but Adefope wants that to change.

continued from page 1A

has suggested that all its customers initiate Stage 3 restrictions.

As of Monday, the city had not moved to Stage 3 of its current drought contingency plan. The City Council will consider adopting a new drought contingency plan at its next regular meeting June 5.

Amid the increasing restrictions on water usage and the continual drain of yard care services on his wallet, Murphy resident Joseph Adefope is ready for a break from the lawn care routine. Looking for an easier, cheaper lawn, but not wanting to lose the look of a healthy yard, he has been drawn to an atypical solution: synthetic grass ground cover.

"My brother told me about it last year. I decided to look into it," Adefope said.

What he found seemed to be a solution to his yard-work woes. Once installed, the only care synthetic grass needs is occasional washing. It's porous. It won't rot. It's safe for pets and chil-

dren. It looks like grass. And its biggest benefit, as far as Adefope is concerned, is that "it conserves a lot of water," dramatically reducing a water bill.

"You've got to find savings and cut costs wherever you can," Adefope said.

The entrepreneurial Adefope liked the pseudo-sod so much, he decided to become a synthetic grass distributor, selling turf to shopping centers, home owners and athletic facilities.

"There's really no limitations to how you can use synthetic grass. The only limitation is your imagination," he said.

Or, as in Adefope's case, municipal ordinances.

Adefope, though he is sold on the idea of having a synthetic yard, is still paying ChemLawn to care for the organic monoculture growing around his home. The only thing standing between Adefope and a care-free synthetic lawn is a Murphy ordinance that requires ground to be covered with "living plant material."

But Adefope is working to win the city's leaders over to the idea of allow-

ing beautiful, ever-green, fake grass to spring up in Murphy.

"My biggest problem with [gaining support for synthetic grass] is trying to change the mentality about it. When people hear 'synthetic grass,' they think AstroTurf," he said. "This is not AstroTurf."

Adefope sells many varieties of ProGreen "replicated grass." Turf options range from long and willowy to short, wide blades. The "grass" is a combination of polyethylene and nylon fiber, mounted onto a urethane-coated rubber base.

The installation process has several steps but can be done by a home owner. Installation involves capping sprinklers, removing grass, laying a weed-blocking screen and leveling the yard surface with crushed road base before rolling out and fastening the turf.

Adefope estimates that ProGreen

synthetic grass costs between \$2 and \$6 per square foot. Professional installation adds to the price tag. But Adefope insists that even with an initial investment of several thousand dollars, a synthetic lawn would pay for itself after a few years based on savings from water conserved and maintenance costs avoided.

Adefope sees the current drought as an opportunity for people to make the switch to synthetic grass and benefit from water- and money-saving yards.

"With drought being what it is in Texas, I think that this will be a good benefit," Adefope said.

"Your home is a cost center," Adefope said. "This turns a cost center into a profit center ... That's its best asset."

For more information about synthetic grass, contact Joseph Adefope by emailing joe@jojope.com or by calling 972-571-2102.