

Artificial Grass in Caledon: 2026 Cost & ROI Report

Installation pricing, ten-year ownership costs, water-bill impacts and payback analysis for Caledon homeowners

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COVERAGE	Town of Caledon, Regional Municipality of Peel, Ontario
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Artificial Grass Caledon Research publishes data-driven local studies on residential landscaping, water use and outdoor surfaces in Caledon and the Greater Toronto Area. This report is provided free for information purposes.

ABSTRACT

This report assembles published 2026 pricing for residential artificial-grass installation in Caledon and the Greater Toronto Area, then models the ten-year cost of owning a synthetic lawn against a natural lawn on a typical Caledon property. All inputs are drawn from published sources — installer price guides, the Region of Peel's 2026 water and wastewater rates, and Environment and Climate Change Canada climate normals — with every modelling assumption stated where it is used.

We find that a mid-range artificial lawn for a typical 500 sq ft Caledon backyard costs **\$6,500–\$9,000 installed**, that irrigating the same natural lawn uses roughly **27.9 m³ of water per season (about \$66 at Peel's 2026 combined rates)**, and that the investment breaks even in approximately **five years when compared against professionally serviced lawn care** — but does not pay back against do-it-yourself lawn care, where the trade-off is the owner's time rather than money.

KEY FINDINGS AT A GLANCE

\$12–22

per sq ft, installed price range published for the Caledon/GTA market in 2026

27.9 m³

seasonal irrigation for a 500 sq ft lawn (24-week model)

\$66/yr

water + wastewater cost of that irrigation at Peel's 2026 rates

≈5 yrs

break-even vs professionally serviced lawn care (500 sq ft)

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1 The Caledon market and the 2026 pricing basis

Caledon is one of Ontario's fastest-growing towns, with 76,581 residents and 23,699 households recorded in the 2021 Census, a 15.2% increase over 2016 [1]. The Town projects growth to roughly 300,000 residents and 67,000 new homes by 2051 [2]. Its housing stock is overwhelmingly low-density: detached homes represent 75–100% of sales in most Caledon communities, with acre-plus lots, horse farms and estate properties defining areas like Palgrave and Caledon East [3]. That combination — large, owner-occupied lots with substantial yard space — places Caledon among the GTA's most active residential artificial-grass markets.

Three published price references anchor this report's 2026 cost basis (Table 1). They converge on a working band of **\$12–\$22 per sq ft installed** for landscape turf, with the middle of the market at \$13–\$18.

Table 1 — Published 2026 installed-price references for the Caledon/GTA market. Sources: [4][5][6][7].

Reference	Basis	Published figure
Design Turf (GTA installer, Caledon service area)	fully installed, residential	\$12–22 per sq ft
GTA tier guide (entry / mid / premium)	fully installed	\$10–12 / \$13–18 / \$19–25+ per sq ft
Southwest Greens Ontario	materials and installation	\$12–17 per sq ft
Dura Lawn cost model (1,000 sq ft)	material + install average	\$13,815 avg (\$8,790–\$18,840)

Material typically accounts for \$5–\$9 per sq ft of the total, with excavation, aggregate base, compaction, labour and finishing making up the remainder [7]. The spread between entry and premium work is driven less by the turf carpet itself than by what sits under it — Section 6 returns to this.

2 What a typical Caledon project costs

Applying the mid-market band to three representative project sizes produces the estimates in Table 2. Caledon's larger lots make the 500–700 sq ft range the most relevant reference; newer subdivisions around Bolton and Mayfield West introduce smaller backyards closer to 300 sq ft. The mid-market midpoint (\$15.50/sq ft) is used for the single-figure column.

Table 2 — Representative project costs at published mid-market rates. Derived from [4][5]; assumptions in \$M.

Project	Area	At \$15.50/sq ft	At \$13–18/sq ft
Compact courtyard / new-build yard	300 sq ft	\$4,650	\$3,900–5,400
Typical family backyard	500 sq ft	\$7,750	\$6,500–9,000
Estate or acre-plus property	700 sq ft	\$10,850	\$9,100–12,600

These are planning figures, not quotes: site access, soil conditions and product selection move any specific project within or outside the band. A typical Caledon family backyard of about 500 sq ft — the reference project used throughout this report — lands at **\$6,500–\$9,000 installed**.

3 Ten-year cost comparison: artificial vs natural

The correct comparison frame is total cost of ownership over the surface's service life. Quality residential turf is routinely warranted for 10–15 years; this report uses a ten-year window. Table 3 sets out both ownership stacks. Every figure is either published (and cited) or labelled as an assumption in the methodology.

Table 3 — Ten-year ownership stacks for a 500 sq ft Caledon lawn. Sources and assumptions: [4][7][8][9]; \$M.

Component	Artificial lawn	Natural lawn (serviced)	Natural lawn (DIY)
Establishment (install / sod + labour)	\$7,750	\$1,000	\$1,000
Irrigation, 27.9 m ³ /season at Peel 2026 rates	—	\$66/yr	\$66/yr
Mowing service / own equipment & time	—	\$1,200/yr (A)	time only (A)
Fertilizer, overseeding, weed control	—	\$150/yr (A)	\$150/yr (A)
Upkeep (rinse, brush, infill top-up)	\$100/yr (A)	—	—
Ten-year total	\$8,750	\$15,160	\$3,160 + time

(A) marks a stated assumption, not a sourced figure — see §M. The two natural-lawn scenarios bracket how Caledon households actually maintain grass: fully serviced care, or do-it-yourself care where the principal cost is the owner's time (roughly 30 hours per season at 24 mows — assumption).

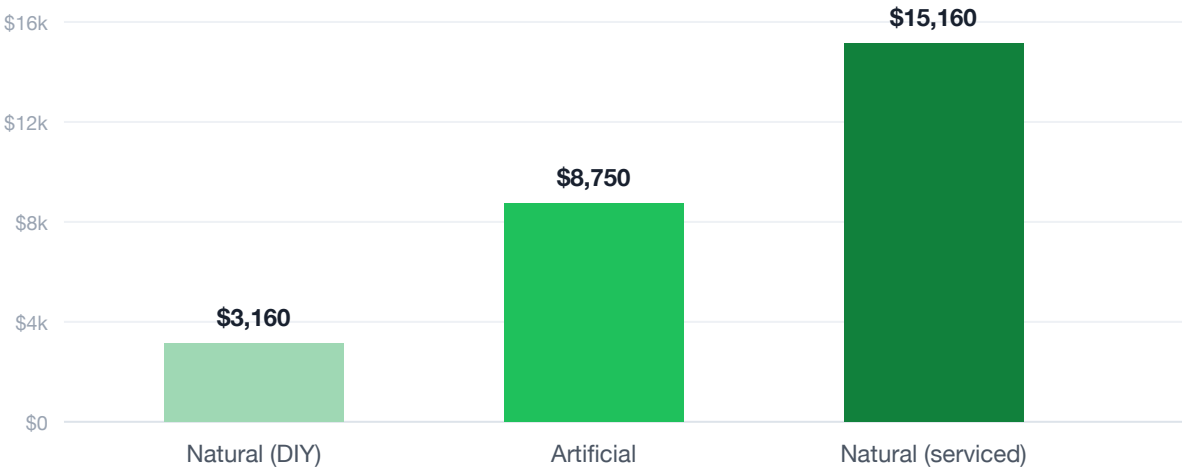


Figure 1 — Ten-year total cost of ownership for a 500 sq ft Caledon lawn under three maintenance regimes. DIY excludes the value of the owner's time. Derived from [4][7][8][9]; assumptions in §M.

The finding cuts both ways, and we report both: against **professionally serviced** lawn care, artificial turf is the cheaper ten-year proposition by roughly **\$6,400**; against **do-it-yourself** care, turf never catches up in cash terms — what it purchases instead is roughly 300 hours of the owner's time over the decade and freedom from re-sodding worn patches.

4 The water component at Peel's 2026 rates

Caledon water is billed by the Region of Peel. Effective April 1, 2026, single-unit residential customers pay **\$1.1308/m³** for the first 50 m³ per billing period and \$2.4321/m³ above it; wastewater is billed separately at \$1.4538/m³ applied to 85% of metered use — a combined marginal cost of about **\$2.37/m³** in the first tier [8].

Using the growing-season irrigation model described in §M (2.5 cm/week over 24 weeks on 46.45 m²), a 500 sq ft natural lawn consumes **27.9 m³ per season**, costing about **\$66/year** in water and wastewater charges. The dollar figure is deliberately honest: at Peel's 2026 rates, irrigation savings alone do not justify a turf conversion. The water case for turf rests instead on non-cash factors:

- **Restriction resilience.** Peel's published guidance asks residents to water only before 10 a.m. or after 7 p.m. and to halve run times outside peak summer [10]; formal mandatory restrictions would be activated only during sustained drought or supply emergencies [10]. Artificial turf is indifferent to all of these.
- **Runoff and waste.** The U.S. EPA estimates that as much as 50% of outdoor irrigation water is lost to wind, evaporation and runoff [9] — water that in Caledon is billed, treated, and never reaches a root.
- **Household share.** Outdoor use accounts for more than 30% of average household water consumption [9]; eliminating lawn irrigation removes the largest discretionary slice of it.

LOCAL CONTEXT — CALEDON'S WELL-WATER SPLIT

A notable share of rural Caledon properties — in Alton, Palgrave, Caledon East, Caledon Village, Cheltenham and Inglewood — are served by municipal well systems or private wells [11]. Properties on private wells pay no volumetric water bill at all, so the cash case for turf on water savings is weaker still. The case for turf on those properties rests on time, consistency and restriction-proofing rather than the water meter.

5 Payback period and sensitivity

Figure 2 tracks cumulative cost year by year. Against serviced lawn care, the 500 sq ft reference project breaks even just past **year five** and is roughly \$6,400 ahead by year ten. Because mowing service is largely a flat cost regardless of lawn size, smaller projects break even faster (Table 4).

Table 4 — Break-even vs serviced lawn care, by project size. *Derived; assumptions in §M.*

Project	Upfront difference	Annual saving	Break-even
300 sq ft	\$3,650	\$1,290	≈2.8 years
500 sq ft	\$6,750	\$1,316	≈5.1 years
700 sq ft	\$9,850	\$1,343	≈7.3 years

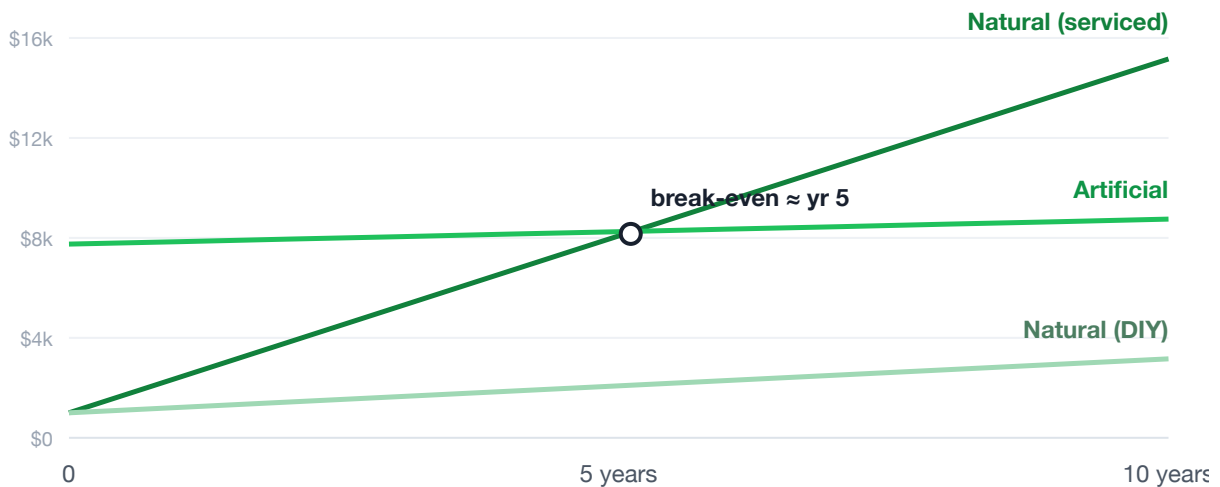


Figure 2 — Cumulative ownership cost, 500 sq ft Caledon lawn, years 0–10. The artificial and serviced-natural curves cross just past year five. *Derived; assumptions in \$M.*

6 What moves a quote up or down

Published ranges are wide because site conditions are. The factors Caledon installers price for:

- **Base preparation.** Caledon's rural soils vary from heavy clay near the Humber River valley to thinner glacial till on the Oak Ridges Moraine; both require adequate aggregate base and drainage grading to resist freeze-thaw heave over the 77 freeze-thaw cycles Ontario averages annually.
- **Access.** Acre-plus estate properties may offer excellent machinery access, but older village cores (Bolton, Inglewood, Caledon East) can mean narrow side yards and wheelbarrow-only access, raising labour hours [3].
- **Product tier.** Face weight, pile height and backing separate a \$12/sq ft entry product from a \$22 premium one; putting-green surfaces sit above even premium landscape turf [4][5].
- **Shape and edges.** Curves, pool coping, tree rings and planting-bed borders add cutting and seaming time.
- **Project size.** Larger areas spread fixed costs (delivery, disposal, equipment) over more square feet, lowering the unit rate [4].

M Methodology & data sources

This is a desk-research report. Published figures were collected in August 2026 from the sources listed under References: municipal and regional rate pages, the 2021 Census via Wikipedia and Statistics Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada climate normals (Toronto Pearson Int'l A, 1991–2020), a U.S. EPA WaterSense statistics page, and published GTA installer price guides including Design Turf, which serves the Caledon area directly.

Stated assumptions (not sourced facts): (i) irrigation model — an actively maintained lawn receives 2.5 cm of water per week over a 24-week southern Ontario growing season (a widely used horticultural guideline); (ii) mowing service \$1,200/season; (iii) fertilizer/overseed/weed control \$150/yr; (iv) turf upkeep \$100/yr; (v) sod establishment \$1,000 for 500 sq ft; (vi) DIY time $\approx$ 30 h/season. Derived figures combine these assumptions with the cited rates; changing any assumption changes the results — Section 5 shows the sensitivity to project size.

Limitations

Prices are published planning figures, not quotations; actual quotes vary with site conditions. The irrigation model is a guideline-based estimate — real households water differently, and Caledon's 806.8 mm of well-distributed annual precipitation (1991–2020 normals at Toronto Pearson) reduces irrigation need in normal summers. Ten-year figures are undiscounted nominal dollars. This report is not an engineering, agronomic or financial assessment of any specific property.

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CITE THIS REPORT

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