

WATERING INSTRUCTIONS

SPRING PLANTINGS

SHADE, ORNAMENTAL, BIRCH, & CRABAPPLE TREES

Water base of plant using a slow trickle for 10-15 minutes twice the first week and once the second week.

Water once every two weeks for the rest of the summer.

FALL PLANTINGS

Water base of plant using a slow trickle for 10-15 minutes twice the first week and once the second week.

Water once more thoroughly in November.

PINES & SPRUCE TREES

Water base of plant using a slow trickle for 10-15 minutes twice the first week and once the second week.

Water once every three weeks for the rest of the summer.

Water base of plant using a slow trickle for 10-15 minutes twice the first week and once the second week.

Water once more thoroughly in November.

DECIDUOUS SHRUBS AND GROUNDCOVER

Water base of plant every other day for the first two weeks.

Water once a week for the rest of the summer.

Water base of plant every other day for the first two weeks.

Water once a week until the leaves fall off. Water once more thoroughly in November.

NOTE: Water less during cool, moist periods and more during dry, hot periods. You may count a slow, soaking rainfall of 1" or more as one watering.

SUMMER PLANT WATERING SCHEDULE:

- Groundcover/Perennials – one good soaking each week.
- Deciduous Shrubs – one good soaking every one to two weeks.
- Evergreen Shrubs – one good soaking every three weeks.
- Shade/Ornamental/Evergreen Trees: one good soaking every two to three weeks.

NOTE: Moisture-loving plants (Birch & Dogwood) will need twice as much water. Be careful, however, not to over-water your plants, especially if you have an irrigation system. Too much water is just as harmful as not enough water.

MAINTENANCE TIPS FOR THE FIRST YEAR AFTER INSTALLATION.

SPRING – March and April

- Remove dead wood with sharp, clean pruners.
- Apply an acidifying fertilizer to Rhododendrons, Azaleas, and Yews.
- Apply a pre-emergent herbicide to beds to reduce weed germination of over-wintering weed seeds.

WARNING: Do not apply pre-emergent herbicide to any area where Spring bulbs are planted; it will stunt their growth and appearance. Also avoid treating areas planted with re-seeding annuals and wildflowers as it will kill the emerging seedlings.

- Remove all debris from the lawn and beds.
- Fertilize the lawn.
- Prune Summer flowering shrubs (i.e. Spirea, Hydrangea, Potentilla).

SUMMER – June, July, and August

- Fertilize the lawn once in early June and again in early August with a slow-release formula.
- Make sure to water the lawn so that it receives 1” of water per week (twice at ½”).

NOTE: It is best to water in the early morning and to give deep, infrequent soakings.

- Apply insecticide to all borer susceptible plants (White Birch), flowering Plums/Cherries, and Cranberry Viburnum). Apply about the first week in June and again 3 weeks later. Follow application instructions carefully, wear heavy clothing and unlined nitrile gloves (available at most hardware stores).
- Prune Spring flowering plants (Lilacs, Crabapples, Viburnums, Plums, etc) shortly after blooming is completed.
- All other plants, except those that flower in Summer, can be pruned to their desired shapes. Be sure to remove all dead wood.

FALL – September, October, November

- Remove debris from lawn and beds.
- Fertilize lawn in early October.
- Cut back perennials when foliage turns brown and wilts. Some perennials over-winter best with a tuft of dead foliage left around the crown. If you're unsure about the variety, you can leave about 4-6" of growth around the base.

NOTE: Do not cut back perennials having Winter interest (Autumn Joy Sedum, Coneflower, Ornamental Grasses, etc.).

PRUNING OVERVIEW

Pruning is an excellent way to take control of your landscape. Consider the benefits:

- Health – always remove dead, diseased, broken, or unhealthy branches to protect affected trees and shrubs as well as others nearby. Limbs that rub against other branches should also be pruned away.
- Safety – dead limbs, as well as branches that obstruct signs and walkways are a danger and must be removed. Overgrown shrubs create a potential fire hazard and provide hiding places for burglars. Both problems are easily eliminated by careful pruning.
- Flowers & Fruit – by carefully pruning unnecessary branches, the trees and shrubs will place more effort into increasing flower and fruit production.
- Special Effects – if a tree or shrub has a special quality (i.e. showy bark, unusual branching pattern), the specimen can be 'limbed up' – a technique which removes lower branches in order to show off its best features.
- Plant Size – pruning can help to maintain the specific size of trees and shrubs relative to other plantings and nearby buildings.
- Shape – this depends partly on the growth habits of the variety, and partly on the pruning. Prune out-of-place branches to retain shape and encourage fullness in order to take best advantage of the plant's natural appearance. It would be unwise to try to prune a plant which is naturally columnar into a round ball or vice-versa.

Once you have decided upon the purpose of pruning, you need to know how the plants will respond to pruning during each season of the year.

- Winter – during mid to late-Winter, new bud production is stimulated by pruning since the shrubs are well stocked with food reserves. Unfortunately, a warm spell may encourage new growth too early which then becomes susceptible to frost damage when cold weather returns. In addition, Winter-pruned plants may bleed profusely during a warm spell; this can quickly deplete them of their store of carbohydrates necessary for best flower and fruit production.

- Early Spring – shrubs pruned in early Spring will heal more quickly than those trimmed in Winter. Be sure to know when your shrubs and trees bloom. Since pruning may remove potential flower buds from Spring flowering shrubs, it is best to cut them back at a later time. Summer flowering shrubs, on the other hand, flower on new wood. Pruning them will stimulate a flush of growth resulting in a more spectacular display.
- Late Spring – minor reshaping of Spring flowering shrubs as soon as they finish flowering will give them sufficient time to form next year's buds.
- Summer – this is the season to control overgrown shrubs and trees since they are manufacturing and storing food reserves rather than using them. This allows you an opportunity to shape and trim without promoting excessive growth.
- Fall – this is not the best season for pruning. Pruning at this time of year stimulates the buds that formed over the summer to grow. Unfortunately, this growth will not have time to mature and will probably be killed by frost. Limit your pruning to dead branches, safety concerns, or only minor thinning.

Now that you have decided why and when to prune, there are a few basics on how to prune. Let's start with shrubs. Many of these tips apply to trees as well.

- Always cut the stem back to a bud and never leave more than a quarter inch stub. These stubs invite pathogens and insects to gain access into the rest of the plant.
- Clip about a quarter of an inch above and at a slight angle away from the buds. This allows water to roll off the cut and not collect around the wound. For stems that have buds in pairs, cut straight across and, if trying to redirect growth, remove one of the buds.
- Never cut into the 'collar', the thickest part of the stem where it connects to its superior branch. Retention of the collar is necessary as it will grow over and heal the cut.
- Always prune back to living wood. A dead branch often looks gray and shriveled, and reveals no green when the bark is scratched with a thumbnail.
- When pruning dead limbs, such as those with cankers, make the cut 6-12" below any sign of damage to insure removal of all disease. Do not compost any trimmings which are visibly infected.
- To avoid the spread of disease to other non-diseased plants, dip pruners in a 10% bleach solution each time a new plant is trimmed. Do not prune wet plants as this can further spread disease.
- Do not remove more than one-third of the living branches in any one year. If you do, the plant will produce 'suckers' from the base or 'watersprouts' from the upper branches, which are often unsightly and weakly attached to the plant.
- Use the correct tool for the job and make sure it is sharp. Use hand pruners for anything less than ½" diameter cut. Bypass pruners make the cleanest cut, although anvil-type pruners are also available. For branches from ½" to 1 ½", use a lopper. A pruning saw will handle wood up to 10" in diameter. Use pole pruners when you cannot reach higher branches. To achieve the molded look, hedge trimmers are best.
- Finally, make the smallest, cleanest, and smoothest cuts possible.

Trimming a tree also has a few rules...

- Don't attempt to trim a tree if you need to leave the ground to do it. Your physical safety is more important than the appearance of your tree or shrub. Leave this part of your pruning chores to the professionals.
- There are a few pruning chores that you can undertake while on the ground. For example, a tree can be limbed up to provide better clearance underneath. Before it gets too tall, a young tree can be trained to develop a strong scaffold (underlying structure).
- If you need to prune a large branch, use the following three-step procedure.
 1. About 6-12" from the trunk, cut a third of the way through the bottom of the branch with a tree saw. Later, when the branch falls, the undercut will prevent any bark from tearing the trunk.
 2. Remove the branch, sawing from the top about 1-3" beyond the first cut.
 3. Remove the stub at the base of the branch being careful to leave the collar.

Pruning an Evergreen is a little different...

Pines and Spruce do not have buds up and down their stems as shrubs do. Their only growing point is at the tips. These tips can be pruned back by cutting one-half of the 'candle' in the Spring, the only time these trees grow. Cutting this candle will result in a healthier, bushier plant that, if pruned correctly, will stay within bounds. Both tree and shrub type Junipers and Arborvitae can be 'feather-pruned' by cutting leading branches on all sides back to just beyond a new smaller leader. This provides the most natural affect for these faster growing varieties.

Finally, it has been recommended that cuts be painted with 'tree paint' in order to help them heal faster. Recently, it has been discovered that doing this is detrimental to the plant. It is better to leave the wound open; it will heal faster with less difficulty.

WEEDING INSTRUCTIONS

Weeds are a continuous maintenance task. It is impossible to eliminate all weeds in your landscape. To help reduce the amount of weeds in your landscape, we suggest:

- Sprinklers – do NOT water plant beds with a sprinkler; watering the entire bed area helps geminate weed seeds.
- In Early April – apply a pre-emergent weed preventer. This application will control germinating seeds of annual and perennial weeds. Follow package instructions for most effective applications.
- Herbicides – When weeds appear and are 3" or smaller, spray with 'RoundUp' or a similar herbicide. Herbicides are especially appropriate for perennial weeds with long taproots (dandelions) or traveling underground rhizomes (quack-grass, ground ivy).
- When all else fails – pull them! This is particularly effective on annual weeds with shallow root systems (velvet leaf, chickweed) and will help you minimize the amount of herbicide you use.

The following list of maintenance tips is a general guideline to use to care for the plants in your landscape. Unfortunately, it is impossible to anticipate all the problems that may effect your plants. This list is quite general, but should suffice to answer most of your questions. If problems arise that you need our assistance, please do not hesitate to call our office.

Unless otherwise specified, fertilize your plants beginning one year after installation with a well-balanced liquid fertilizer (i.e., the three numbers on the fertilizer analysis are as equal to each other as possible). In general, the best time to fertilize your plants is in the late Fall (after the leaves have fallen) and very early in Spring (before new growth begins. In general, your plants will need additional water the first year or two, and then whenever drought conditions exist. Inspect your plants regularly to look for potential pests or disease. Curled leaves, discolored foliage, visible insects, and wilting are all indications of a problem and should be addressed.

- **Arborvitae** - It is essential that these plants receive adequate water. If they dry out, their needles will drop. You can trim the plants after the first flush of growth has matured in late Spring. Trimming can be rather hard but be careful not to trim into the 'dead' zone in the middle of the plant. Twigs, which lack needles, will not grow again. When trimming, be sure to keep the plants wider at the base than at the top. Fertilize with an acidic fertilizer in early Spring.
- **Boxwood** – May need light Winter protection the first year. Drive stakes around the south and west sides and tack burlap to them or, as an alternative, consider an anti-desiccant application. Boxwoods may be pruned any time except late Summer or early Fall with a clean, sharp pair of hedge clippers.
- **Euonymous** – Be particularly careful to water early in the day so that the foliage will dry by nighttime. This practice will limit the amount of foliar disease. Prune back hard in Spring, perhaps by half the total height of the plant. This will result in a much fuller plant.
- **Holly** – This plant resents being pruned until it has been established for several years and then they can stand some shearing. Otherwise, holly thrives on neglect. Adequate water and an anti-desiccant are appreciated.
- **Juniper** - These will need some pruning. Winter-killed branches will need to be removed. When doing this, be sure to prune back to a vigorous side shoot that is growing in the same direction. Do not cut into the 'dead' area and be sure to leave some green on each branch when pruning hard or they will not regrow. This pruning can be done at any time except late Summer or early Fall.
- **Mugho Pine** – Sawflies are a particular problem with Mugho Pines. They appear in mid-Spring as masses on individual branches and devour new growth. Be particularly vigilant with this plant at that time of year. If spotted, spray with Malathion. These plants can be kept inbounds indefinitely by cutting back the new growth, or candles, by one third every summer by hand or with a string trimmer.
- **Rhododendron** – Winter protection with burlap or an anti-desiccant is strongly recommended. Leaves will curl when very cold but will unfurl when temperatures warm. They do not take kindly to pruning and appreciate being fertilized with an acidic fertilizer such as Miracid.

- **Yew** – These plants are particularly susceptible to overwatering. Soak thoroughly and allow to dry between waterings. Prune in late Spring after new growth has matured. If a plant has outgrown its space, it can be pruned back hard and will bounce back remarkably well. Be careful not to prune too late in the season because the new growth that will be stimulated will not have sufficient time to mature and will be subject to dieback.
- **Barberry** – No special care is required. If shearing them is desired, perform this task in late Spring when the new growth is mature.
- **Burning Bush** – No special care is required. This plant only grows in Spring so be sure to fertilize in late Summer or early Fall to maximize a Spring flush of new growth.
- **Chokeberry** – Although no special care is required, pruning results in a much better plant. If left unpruned, the result will be an open, leggy plant with leaves present only on the top half to one third of the plant. The best time to prune is when you see the plant is beginning to look leggy. Remove approximately one half of the height in late Fall or very early Spring but you must also understand that by doing this, you will not have flowers or fruit for one year.
- **Cotoneaster** – Hedge the upright varieties like ‘Peking’ after the Spring flush of growth has hardened off and as needed through the summer. The more you hedge them, the thicker the shrubs will become in a shorter period of time. The low, spreading varieties are headed back, meaning that overly long branches need to be cut back to a side branch growing in the same direction.
- **Alpine Currant** – Hedge these plants in Spring after new growth has matured and then as needed throughout the year. Be sure and keep the base of the plant wider than the top. If the plant begins to thin out, cut it back to six inches from the ground and the plant will grow back vigorously.
- **Dogwoods** – As with most shrubs, these will need additional water during dry spells. To maintain nicely colored stems, remove the thickest branches completely and cut back others by one third. This can be done in the early Spring. If the shrub becomes overgrown, cut them down completely. They will regrow in two seasons. One disease to watch for is canker. Canker will appear as dark blotches on older stems; therefore, if plants are renewed pruned as described above, canker is not much of a problem. If it is noticed, immediately prune out the entire branch. Be sure to dip the pruners in a 10% bleach solution after each cut so the disease does not spread.
- **Forsythia** – These plants are essentially pest free, but yearly pruning to renew the plant is important. Immediately after the flowering remove one quarter to one third of the oldest branches all the way to the ground. This practice will stimulate new stems from the ground. If the plant gets out of hand, it may be cut to six inches above the ground and will grow within three years. In either case, flowering should not be interrupted.
- **PeeGee Hydrangea** – Hard prune these plants either in Winter or in early Spring. Remove all flowers and weak stems, leaving about a dozen of the strongest main stems. To promote the best flowering water the plants thoroughly in summer when the weather is dry. Hydrangeas do not have any significant pest or disease problems.

- **Lilacs** – These must be pruned to keep them blooming well. Remove blooms when they are faded, and renew the plants by cutting out one fourth to one third of the oldest stems all the way to the ground. Head back overly large stems to shorter side shoots growing in the same direction. All pruning should be completed as soon as possible after the blooms fade to give the plant time to develop flower buds for the next season. Mildew may be a problem some years, depending on the weather. Although this fungus is unsightly, it does no harm to the plant and is therefore not necessary to treat.
- **Potentilla** – Water in the dry weather of the Summer. If they are allowed to wilt, flowering is disrupted. These plants require regular pruning. In late Winter or very early Spring, cut out any dead or overly long branches. Reduce the overall height by one half and remove a few of the remaining branches to the ground. Pruning must be completed by the start of the new growth. This practice will delay flowering, but will allow the plants to be much more floriferous throughout the summer.
- **Shrub Rose** – Pruning to keep the plants tidy and inbounds is the major maintenance chore with rose bushes. Remove old or damaged canes in Spring. Black spot is the only problem we see. To limit the amount of black spot it is imperative to water only in the morning so there will be significant time for the foliage to dry before nightfall. Using a systemic fertilizer/fungicide commonly available at any garden/home improvement store can easily control it. Follow the package directions carefully.
- **Spirea** – Intelligent pruning is the key to success with Spireas. They should be allowed to develop into their natural form, not sheared into artificial shapes. Renewal prune to remove one quarter to one third of the stems to the ground to keep them in good shape. Sometimes it is a good idea to rejuvenate the plants by cutting them back to the ground. The only time pruning should be done is right after the plants have bloomed in the Spring. Pruning any other time of the year will result in minimal flower production.
- **Viburnum** – Pruning of these plants is much the same as any other plant. Remove blooms once they have faded, or if berry production is desired, leave them alone. Renew the plants every couple of years by cutting out one quarter to one third of the oldest stems to the ground. Head back overly long branches to a shorter side shoot growing in the same direction. All pruning should be completed as soon as blooms have faded to allow the plants to set their buds for next year's display. Borers can be a problem at times. To ward off these insects keep the plants well watered and fertilized since the borers tend to attack the neglected and stressed plants.
- **Weigela** – Winter dieback is very common for this plant so do not be alarmed. In Spring, after the plant has fully leafed out, simply prune the dead or damaged canes to the ground. Allow the plant to flower and then head back overly long branches to a side branch growing in the same direction. Also at this time rejuvenate the plant by removing the oldest and largest stems to stimulate new shoots at the base of the plant. If necessary, this plant can be cut back completely in very early Spring. This will result in a bushier plant but will eliminate flowering for that season.

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