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## YOUR NEW LANDSCAPE

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# Care and Maintenance Guide

2021

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# Introduction

On the following pages, we have outlined the recommended maintenance and care procedures for your new landscaping and plantings. Though the most expensive part of your landscaping is completed, this does not mean your plantings will survive on their own. A small amount of timely care will result in plantings that look their best and mature more rapidly. Remember that plants are living things, so they must be cared for. We encourage you to follow the Maintenance Suggestions described in the next few pages, not only this year, but also in subsequent years. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call us; we're here to help. We provide a full range of technical and routine horticulture maintenance services through our Landscape Maintenance Department.

## ESTABLISHMENT CARE FOR NEW LAWNS

### **SODDED LAWNS**

During the first week to 10 days, your sod should be soaked thoroughly on a daily basis. In order for the water to penetrate the sod and the soil below, it is recommended that the sprinklers run 1 hour in each location. Areas where the grade is steeper should be watered more frequently for a shorter period of time. The edges of the lawn area along walks, driveways, and around other structures are subject to drying out sooner than the rest of the lawn. For this reason, it is a good practice to water these areas more frequently and at a greater rate.

If your sod begins to shrink, the seams open, or the grass turns a dull green to straw color, this is a sign that you are not watering enough. On the other hand, if your lawn is under water, or if the subsoil is saturated, you are over-watering. Do not drown your lawn, yet do not let it become dehydrated. Monitor it closely.

Newly sodded lawns are quite tender the first 3 weeks. When watering, set your sprinkler so you can move it without walking on the grass. Walking on the grass will poke holes in the tender sod.

Within 1 week to 10 days after your lawn is installed, the grass should be about 3½" tall. At this point, stop watering and give the lawn time to become firm enough to walk on without leaving foot imprints. Using a sharp, lightweight rotary mower, cut the lawn at a 3-3½" height and pick up the clippings. Upon completion of cutting the lawn, water right away. From this time on, the grass must be cut at least once a week. Never mow shorter than 2½". A good rule of thumb when mowing is to never cut more than 1/3 of the grass off at one time.

### **SEEDDED LAWNS**

Seeded lawns are more susceptible to wash out than sodded lawns. Therefore, your watering should be at the lighter and more frequent rate. Until the grass reaches a length of 2½", the soil should be kept uniformly wet at all times. In order to prevent erosion, sloped areas should be watered carefully. Water lightly and frequently. Seeded lawns take a longer time to become established than sodded lawns, so the area must be watered and protected for a longer period. At first, your lawn will look thin. Keep in mind that each grass plant spreads and your lawn will fill out.

Approximately 2-3 weeks after germination, the new lawn will be about 3-4" high and should be mowed. Allow the subsurface to dry out for several days. Then, with a sharp, lightweight 21" mower, cut the lawn (at about 2/3 throttle) and bag the clippings. The lawn is very tender, so be careful turning the mower to avoid tearing the new grass.

We suggest that your new lawn be fertilized with a high nitrogen, slow-release balanced fertilizer such as a 22-0-11, 70% slow release and micro-nutrients. This is applied at the rate of approximately 3-5 lbs. per 1,000 square feet.

It is not possible to prevent weeds, but they are easy to control later. After the lawn is at least 6-8 weeks past germination and has been cut several times, a weed killer, such as Ortho Weed-B-Gon, should be applied.

Due to heavy rains, over sprinkling, or high winds, we cannot guarantee against washout. If washout does occur, simply fill the gullies with topsoil, seed with the same mix, and treat as a newly seeded lawn.

Once your lawn is established, be it sodded or seeded, it will require regular care. It must be cut regularly (weekly), and the clippings can be mulched. If "mown" grass is accumulating on the lawn surface after mowing, rake or re-mow the clippings in order to mulch them. The cutting height should not be shorter than 2½" and one should not remove more than 1/3 of the length of the grass blade at any one mowing.

It should not be necessary to thatch and/or aerate your lawn under normal conditions for the first 2-3 years.

Your lawn will require fertilizing 3-4 times per season, regular watering, and periodic de-weeding. A good watering every 1-2 weeks is adequate. However, in extremely hot, dry weather, more frequent watering will be necessary. Your Kentucky Bluegrass lawn or other cool season grass needs approximately 1" of water per week. This can be accomplished by irrigating with a wave or impact sprinkler for 1-1½ hours at one location. In extremely hot, dry weather water more frequently. In cool spring and fall weather, you can water less frequently. When watering, be careful not to water too often or heavily, keeping in mind that your trees, shrubs, and flowers can become water logged. Plants can be drowned and killed by too much water.

## **LAWN DE-WEEDING**

It is normally necessary to apply a broadleaf post-emergent escalade herbicide twice per year, typically once in early May and once in September, to keep the lawn weed free. The invasion of weeds in the lawn is not abnormal.

## **LAWN FERTILIZATION**

We recommend fertilizing your lawn 3-4 times per year, using a slow-release, well balanced fertilizer such as a 22-0-11, 70% slow release and micro-nutrients blended especially for our Milwaukee area soil conditions. This is accomplished by applying 3-5 lbs. of material per 1,000 square feet. Please refer to your owner's manual for the proper setting for your spreader. Applications are recommended June 1, September 1, and 30-0-15 winterizer with micro-nutrients, November 1. If a 4<sup>th</sup> application is desired, April 1-15 is recommended for 19-0-6 with dimension crab grass preventer.

Due to disease problems, latest research indicates a November fertilizing with 3-5 lbs. per 1,000 square feet slow-release water insoluble fertilizer is better for the lawn and replaces the traditional spring feeding.

## **WINTER PROTECTION**

If your residence is adjacent or near fields or other natural areas, your lawn may be susceptible to damage by field mice. This is especially prevalent in years of early snow cover and little frost. For this reason, it is recommended that a final short cutting be done once the turf has become dormant, about mid-November. The grass should be cut at a 1½" height. This final mowing will prevent damage by field mice.

Other options for rodent control are: 1) Placing poison bait stations around the property and/or 2) Spraying the lawn area with Tersan 75, a fungicide which discourages rodents from damaging the turf.

If your lawn is discolored or mottled in appearance, a disease or insect problem may exist. Please call us. We would be happy to help with this situation.

Here are some special instructions for your new lawn:

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## ESTABLISHMENT CARE FOR NEW PLANTINGS

### **SHADE, ORNAMENTAL, AND EVERGREEN TREES/DECIDUOUS AND EVERGREEN SHRUBS**

The following guidelines should be adhered to in normal conditions. Remember that too little water will cause your plants to wilt and die; too much water will cause them to yellow and drown.

All plantings should be root watered every week for the first year after planting. With a hose running at a trickle, push the nozzle into the soil at the base of the plant so that the water gets to the roots of the plant. We suggest adding super-thrive root stimulant at .5 ounces per gallon of water applied weekly for the first growing season until mid-August, then just a water application.

At the time of planting, soak thoroughly the first day and again the next. If we installed your plantings, this will have been done very thoroughly. Water completely 2 times per week the first 3 weeks. From then on, soak every plant in this manner once each week until frost.

#### **\*\*IMPORTANT\*\***

The above guidelines for watering should be altered as follows for unusual conditions.

1. Additional watering of new plants during dry spells is necessary for several years after planting. Plants require several years of root growth to establish durably.
2. For heavy clay soil or cool wet weather, water half as often.
3. For sandy, gravelly soil or very hot weather, water twice as often.
4. When the roots are deep, soak thoroughly when you water. Allow the ground to absorb all the water it can.
5. Remember, plants can be killed by too much water. Do not water a little every day. Water more thoroughly, but only as scheduled.
6. Maintaining the shape of the dike around the base of the plant will help hold water so that it will soak in around the root zone.

## TREE AND SHRUB FERTILIZATION

It is a good practice to fertilize your plantings to promote growth, vigor, and health for their first 5-6 years. We recommend Spring Valley Professional Fertilizer (or equivalent) Tree and Shrub granular slow release 6-12-9, which can be purchased from Trees on the Move. This material should be lightly broadcast over the root zone of the trees and shrubs, and encompassed into the soil. Be careful not to get granular fertilizer on leaves or adjacent to the base of the plants. If this happens, wash the plants off with a garden hose.

Any discoloration or distortion on leaves of an evergreen or deciduous material may indicate the presence of a pest or disease, or possibly the lack of proper nutrients. The plants should be inspected for pests and the proper action taken. If you have a question or need help, please do not hesitate to call us. We will be happy to help!

## WINTER PROTECTION

### **YOUNG AND SMOOTH BARKED TREES**

Trees such as Flowering Crabs, Plums, Hawthorns, Maples and Willows should be wrapped with tree wrap. Wrap from the ground up to the first main lateral branch while overlapping each spiral to form a double wrapping. This will protect the trees from sunburn and subsequent bark splitting. Encircling the trunk of the tree with galvanized hardware cloth should then further protect the trees. This is to protect the tree from rabbits and other rodents, which can chew on the tender bark. Tree wrap and hardware cloth should be removed in spring and reinstalled in November.

### **SHRUBS**

Galvanized hardware cloth should also be used to protect shrubs from rodent damage. Encircle the entire shrub. Some commonly attacked deciduous shrubs are: *Euonymus alatus* (commonly known as Burning Bush), Dwarf Korean Lilac, and members of the *Prunus* family. Evergreen shrubs that should be protected consist of *Rhododendrons*, *Euonymus vegetus*, and *Euonymus "Sarcoxic"*. Be sure that the hardware cloth is firmly in contact with the ground so that the rodents can't make their way underneath it.



**\*\*IMPORTANT\*\***

The preceding guidelines for winter protection have accounted for the most commonly attacked trees and shrubs. Rodents may attack other plantings, so check periodically throughout the winter for signs of damage (gnaw marks, droppings) and make sure the cloth is secure and high enough. As the snow level increases, it may become necessary to wrap additional cloth higher on the shrub or tree.

**EVERGREENS**

It is important that evergreens have a plentiful water supply for the winter. For this reason, it is highly recommended and very important that they receive a thorough watering before the ground freezes. This is usually done around November 1.

**GROUNDCOVERS, ANNUALS, PERENNIALS, WILDFLOWERS,  
AND PRAIRIE DEVELOPMENTS**

**WATERING**

Irrigate thoroughly 2 times per week for 2 months, and weekly for the remainder of the season. For all new plantings, remember it is just as important to water them the second year as it was the first. Keep in mind the importance of changing the watering schedule depending on weather patterns.

**FERTILIZATION**

Vigorous fertilization encourages rapid plant development and filling in of bed areas. Your groundcover/perennials have been installed in a prepared, fertilized planting bed.

In spring, it is a good practice to install 1-2# of bone meal, 1# of Milogranite, and 1# of 12-4-8 tree and shrub food per 100 square feet of a bed area. **BE SURE TO WASH ANY RESIDUAL OFF THE PLANTS WITH A GARDEN HOSE.** These fertilizers and amendments should be encompassed lightly into the soil/or mulch.

Subsequent to this spring fertilization in the months of May, June, and July, the groundcover can be fed with a liquid soluble fertilizer such as Stern's Miracle-Gro. Liquid fertilizing promotes plant vigor throughout the season and outstanding blossoming effects. **ALWAYS READ THE LABELS ON THE PACKAGE BEFORE USE.**

A common problem seen in fertilizing is the over fertilizing of plants. Doubling the amount of fertilizing will NOT double the vitality of the plant and may very well damage it.

As with other plants, if the leaves are dropping, curling or looking yellowish, things may not be well. It would be a good idea to give us a call to discuss the plant's condition.

## **WINTER PROTECTION**

The first year, all groundcover should be covered with balsam boughs to protect them. In subsequent years, pachysandra, vinca minor and ajuga should be covered.

## **ROSES**

### **PRUNING**

Roses are best pruned in spring before leaves emerge, which is usually the third or fourth week of April. Spring pruning includes removal of all dead or diseased wood, spindly growth, crossing or broken canes, and removal of basal sprouts from stem and roots below the graft union. Branches are cut back to the second or third vigorous bud.

During the summer, pruning involves the removal of faded flowers and spent foliage. Flower stems should be cut down to the first five leaflet that points away from the center of the plant.

In late fall, exceptionally long branches are cut back so that breakage doesn't occur in winter months.

### **FERTILIZATION**

Roses prefer a fertile, well-drained soil, so encompassing organic compost, peat moss, and sand into the bed area with liberal amounts of organic fertilizer such as a Milogranite and bone meal provides an ideal growing environment. Roses are heavy "feeders" and should be fertilized at least once a year with a well-balanced granular fertilizer such as 12-4-8. This should be done in early spring as the leaves begin to expand. Follow up fertilizer applications with a water-soluble product is also recommended as much as twice per month. All applications should begin around May 1 and cease September 1. A good product to use is Stern's Miracle-Gro for Roses.

## INSECT/DISEASE CONTROL

Roses are very susceptible to a wide range of insect and disease organisms. During May and June, it is recommended that fungicide and insecticide applications be made every two weeks. After June, applications can be made at greater intervals depending on weather conditions. Rain, humidity, and overhead irrigation all promote the spread and infection of diseases on roses. Watering of roses should be done directly to the soil, keeping the foliage dry.

Depending on the formulation, the following are products and rates for control of insects and diseases on roses:

Diseases: (use one of the following)

<u>Trade Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>
Dithane/FORE	1 TBS/gal water
Banner	1 tsp/gal water
Daconil	1 tsp/gal water
Triforine	1 TBS/gal water

Insects: (use one of the following)

<u>Trade Name</u>	<u>Rate</u>
Orthene	1 TBS/2 gals water
Diazinon	1 TBS/2 gals water
Malathion 25%	1.5 TBS/gal water
Sevin 50W	2 TBS/gal water
Pentac (for mite control)	1 tsp/gal water

*(References to pesticide products in this publication are for your convenience and are not an endorsement of one product over other similar products. You are responsible for using pesticides according to the manufacturer's current label directions. Follow directions exactly to protect the environment and people from pesticide exposure. Failure to do so violates the law.)*

## WINTER PROTECTION

To protect your roses from any winter damage, cut back any long canes. Do not cut back all canes, just those that are excessively long and subject to wind damage. Soil should then be mounded around the base of the plant covering the main crown. The soil should cover the first 12" of the base of the plant. Marsh hay can then be placed around the base and among all canes. To hold the marsh hay in place, balsam boughs are placed around the entire plant.

Here are some special instructions for your new plantings:

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## MISCELLANEOUS LANDSCAPE INSTALLATIONS

### **CONCRETE WALKS AND PATIOS**

When we installed the concrete walks and patio, we treated the surface with a curling agent. During the first winter, **DO NOT USE SALT** (sodium chloride) **OR CALCIUM CHLORIDE**, or any other commercial ice-melting agent on the concrete surface. These chemicals are very harsh and will damage the surface. For this reason, we recommend the use of sand the first year. In subsequent years, use salt or calcium chloride sparingly.

### **DRAIN TILE**

If underground drain tile is installed at your residence from downspouts or a sump pump, it is important to check the connections annually. The exit points of the drain tile should have a guard (wire) installed on them to prevent rodents from nesting in the pipes. The sump connection from the house should be disconnected mid-November. Otherwise, the drain tile lines are typically above the frost line and can freeze. If this occurs, a backup into the basement could occur during the winter months.

### **RECIRCULATING POOLS**

It is a good idea to pull the drain plugs and drain the water out of both the pool structures as well as the fill and drain pipes. To be sure, pour a cup or two of anti-freeze into the catch basin in these structures. Any removable pumps should be unplugged, drained, and stored in your basement. This would be true with underwater lights as well.

## **CONTAINERS**

As soils inside raised pots will freeze and expand, possibly cracking the pots, it is a good idea to empty the soil out of the containers and turn them upside down during the winter months.

## **LAWN IRRIGATION SYSTEMS**

It is absolutely critical that the irrigation system be drained and blown out properly. One needs a very large capacity, high volume, high-pressure air compressor to properly winterize a lawn irrigation system.

## **LANDSCAPE LIGHTING FIXTURES**

It is a good practice to remove all of the bulbs from the lighting fixtures and lubricate the sockets with a silicone lubricant two times per year. This guards against corrosion and rust. If the paint gets scratched or starts to corrode, it can be repainted. The Rustoleum flat black and green are very close matches. When a low-voltage lighting system is used in close proximity to a lawn irrigation system, there can be some accelerated corrosion problems, which may require more frequent servicing.

If one of the low-voltage lines is dug up during the gardening activities, there is no danger of electric shock. However, a waterproof repair should be made. Please call us and we will advise on the procedure to follow. We will be ready to provide the service ourselves.

The various low-voltage lighting systems that we install are all represented by long-term manufacturers and have full replacement part capabilities.

## **OUTDOOR WOOD STRUCTURES**

Wood used outdoors is subject to on-going degradation due to moisture, sun, and various chemicals that it may be exposed to. As a result, we recommend treating outdoor wood structures with a high quality oil-based transparent, semi-transparent, or opaque stain periodically. Typically, we recommend this be done every two years. This prevents the wood from checking and warping excessively. Some warping of deck boards is not unusual and may require periodic replacement. The treatment on the wood maintains the structural integrity and appearance of your wood products.

## **BRICK PRODUCTS**

Brick products used in paving or garden walls should be sealed every 2-3 years with a sealer such as Chem-Stop, Luster Seal, or Paver Guard. The sealer cuts down on the moisture absorption of the bricks and makes them more durable through the winters. When we install the paving initially, we seal the brickwork as a routine procedure, but it should be resealed periodically.

## **MULCHED BEDS**

Mulched beds that have been installed will need periodic replenishment. Gravel mulches such as crushed granite, washed stone, and decorative stones, usually need re-raking and straightening in spring, as well as additional new stone to cover any “bald” spots.

Organic products such as a chunk bark and shredded wood mulch actually decay over a period of time, typically at the rate of 1” per year. As a result, they need replenishment approximately every 2 years. If you would like your beds looking very fresh, every year may be necessary.

**CAUTION:** It is important not to cast excessive amounts of mulch around the trunks of smooth barked shade and ornamental trees. This can decay the cambium at the base of the tree and cause basal canker type problems.

The products used in your beds are readily available, and we would be happy to provide them for your on-going gardening activities.

## **ROUTINE GARDENING**

The performance of routine gardening activities ensures that your plants will develop without adverse competition and that your bed areas will be aesthetically neat and pleasing on an on-going basis. These chores involve edging the beds, if they are not edged with plastic or metal. Two to three times per season is recommended. Cultivating beds that are not mulched are recommended 2-3 times per season. Keeping the beds de-weeded is especially important during the establishment phase of groundcover and perennial areas. The weed seeds are abundant in all soils, and can germinate and start to take over an unattended area. There are both pre- and post-emergent herbicide chemicals such as Ornamec that even have the capacity to kill grassy weeds without adversely affecting the groundcover and perennials. The old cliché “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” certainly applies to de-weeding. If you keep up with de-weeding activities, they are usually quite tolerable. However, if you get behind, these activities can be somewhat overwhelming at times.

## **PAVED AREA WEED CONTROL**

It is amazing how aggressive weed seeds can germinate in undesirable areas such as narrow cracks adjacent to curb lines, sidewalk edges, and within the joints in brick and concrete paving. These weeds are very hard to pull by hand, but very easy to eradicate utilizing a non-selective post-emergent herbicide such as Round-Up. Round-Up can be purchased in pre-mixed formulations or is mixed at rates between 1-2 ounces per gallon. A gallon of solution goes quite far. Be cautious utilizing this material, as any green plant life this is sprayed on will be killed by an herbicide. Round-Up is also an effective post-emergent in bed areas where there is woody plant material around which it is safe to use.

## **TREE STAKES/GUY WIRES**

Tree stakes and guy wires can be removed when your tree is solidly anchored through root re-growth. This is typically about 2 seasons after the plant was installed. At this time, if the tree seems to be unstable or moveable within the ground area, leave the stakes on for support. If the tree seems to be very solidly anchored, the guy cables and/or tree stakes can be removed.

## **PRUNING OF EVERGREEN AND DECIDUOUS SHRUBS**

It is a good practice to remove any dead, damaged, or broken branches from your shrubs on an on-going basis. As they have been newly installed, maturity is one of the key objectives, so allow the plants to maintain their natural appearance when trimming and shaping. They should be shaped lightly to allow maturity and to emphasize their natural appearance.

The exception to this are plants used in hedge rows where a more formal affect is desired. It would be suggested that about ½ the new growth be sheared off, allowing the plant to achieve maturity, but maintain a full appearance. Hedges should be kept broader at the base than at the top.

Trimming and shaping of the exterior of the plants is usually done twice per year; once in early June, and once in early September.

Heavier thinning is required as your plants mature and get beyond an age of 5 or 6 years. At this point, during the dormant season, it is recommended that the deciduous plants have dead, damaged, broken, and repetitive interior wood removed.