

## ***After Care Guide for New Plantings***

- Maintain the integrity of the design and the original intent throughout the evolution of the landscape.
- Knowing how trees and shrubs grow and thrive is essential to creating a strong, balanced landscape.
- Proper pruning of each individual tree and shrub for a natural form and sustainable beauty.
- Poor pruning is often irreversible.

### **Watering**

**Water only** when water is needed. Then soak deeply and thoroughly.

**Don't** keep the ground continually saturated with frequent, light watering.

**Don't** allow the ground to completely dry out and the foliage to wither.

**Proper watering** is a balance between these two extremes.

**Trees and Shrubs** — When soil is dry, 6-8 inches deep, water deeply and thoroughly. Avoid frequent, light watering. Check both the root ball and the surrounding backfill.

**Perennials and Groundcovers** — When soil is dry, 1-3 inches deep, water thoroughly, but avoid runoff and soil erosion.

**Sodded Lawns** — Soak new sod thoroughly twice a day for the first two weeks and once a day for the following two weeks. Gradually reduce the frequency, watering only when the lawn exhibits a bluish cast and when footprint impressions remain, indicating dryness. Avoid light, frequent watering or excessive watering resulting in runoff.

**Seeded Lawns** — Lightly sprinkle the seed several times each day to keep the soil evenly moist at all times until the seed sprouts. Gradually reduce the frequency and increase the amount applied at one time, watering only when the lawn exhibits a bluish cast indicating dryness. Avoid over watering that washes away seed and mulch.

**Winter Watering** — Check soil moisture conditions regularly where there is no snow cover and the ground is not frozen. Hand water plants as needed when air temperatures are well above freezing. Areas in full sun will have radically different conditions than those in the shade; focus on the sunny areas especially. Deep root water trees.

**Monitor** the irrigation system regularly for damage and to correct poor coverage.

**Winterization** — Call your irrigation professional to prepare your system for the winter.

### **Fall Care**

**Shear off** the dead tops of perennials as they become unsightly or flattened by early snowfalls.

**Leave on** dead seed heads that provide aesthetic value such as ornamental grasses and some flowering shrubs.

**Remove** dead annuals and clean up leaf litter smothering small plants.

**Be certain** the ground does not become too dry before freezing and water can no longer penetrate the soil.

**Apply** tree wrap from ground level up to the lower branches of young, thin-barked trees to protect from winter sun scald.

## Fertilizing

**Don't fertilize** newly-planted trees and shrubs the first year.

**Fertilize** trees and shrubs regularly in the spring after their first year when the leaves are fully opened.

**Don't fertilize** trees and shrubs beyond mid-summer.

## General Care

**Monitor** flower and shrub beds regularly for weeds; remove weeds while still small, before seed heads form.

**Monitor** the landscape regularly for insect infestations; treat before major damage occurs.

**Remove** tree wrap when trees begin to leaf out and grow again in the spring.

**Remove** tree stakes and wire 1 year after planting. This is essential for developing the strength of the trunk.

**Mulch** should be replenished in the spring/fall for continued good coverage against weed growth; to maintain soil moisture and moderate temperature extremes.

## Green Facts

**The well-designed landscape** will reduce energy costs, lower noise levels, and enhance views giving an entire property more interest and a sense of well being. Appropriate selection and placement of plant material can lower heating and cooling costs by as much as 20%. The landscape can add as much as 14% to the resale value and reduce the time it takes to sell the property. Investing today will give pleasure and value for years to come.

**Xeriscape** — Any landscape that incorporates low water usage as a basis for its plan. In a semi-arid environment xeriscaping is the ideal solution for the low maintenance, low water landscape. Xeriscape designs are not limited to native plant species. There are many introduced plants with desirable qualities which are well adapted.

**Sustainability** — Landscape design and construction methods for efficient use of energy, water and other resources; minimizing air, water, and noise pollution; controlling erosion, recycling wastes, and for reducing long-term maintenance and reconstruction.

**Noxious weeds** — Land Under Siege [www.cwma.org/weed.htm](http://www.cwma.org/weed.htm) — Invasive weeds alien to native ecosystems often forming monocultures. Noxious weed is a legal term used by state and federal agencies to designate plants posing serious threats to agriculture and the environment. Management is vital to not only achieving desirable plant communities, but to avoid the takeover of entire ecosystems with altered habitat adversely affecting wildlife.

**Invasive ornamental plants** — A threat to our natural heritage — They proliferate outside the cultivated environment of the home garden and become fierce competitors with our native vegetation.

**Spring** — A great time for establishing your plants before summer heat arrives. Ground conditions are often better with the frequent spring snows and rain.

**Fall** — The cooler temperatures are less stressful to plants, and root growth continues long after freezing air temperatures have arrived. Fall plantings with their more developed root systems are ready to burst into spring.

**Winter** — The best time for design consultation before the spring rush. And, hardscaping works too!