

MAINTAINING YOUR NEW LANDSCAPE PLANTS

GROUND COVERS

Watering: New ground covers need to be kept moist but not saturated. This generally means watering 2 to 3 times per week. If you're not sure if the plants need water, stick your finger into the soil about 3". If the soil is moist, do not water. If the soil is dry, water.

Fertilizing: Your new ground cover was fertilized upon installation and should be fertilized again approximately 30 days after planting, then every 45 days after that for the first year. Do not fertilize after the end of August so the plants have time to harden off before winter. A high quality granular fertilizer or liquid foliar fertilizer should be used. After the first year ground covers should be fertilized 1 to 2 times per season. We recommend early spring and then again after flowering (if your ground cover flowers).

Hand Weeding: During the first 1 to 3 years while the plants are establishing themselves, hand weeding must be done until the plants completely fill in and cover the soil. After the first year you may use preventative weed control products such as "Preen" but try to limit the use of these products to 1 or 2 times per season. These products are useful in combination with hand weeding for developing a weed free ground cover bed.

Mulching: When we installed your ground covers, we installed them with a 2" to 3" layer of bark or shredded bark mulch. If after the first year, the mulch seems thin and groundcover is establishing itself slowly, you may need to add mulch to the ground cover beds being careful not to cover the plants with mulch. Any bark mulch product - shredded or chipped - will be fine. Mulch is used to retain soil moisture, add organic matter to soil, and keep weeds under control.

Pruning: The ground cover will probably not need any type of pruning unless it starts to grow over sidewalks, bed borders, up trees, foundations etc.

PERENNIALS

Watering: New perennials need to be kept moist but not saturated. This generally means watering 2 to 3 times per week. If you're not sure if the plants need water, stick your finger into the soil about 3". If the soil is moist, do not water. If the soil is dry, water.

Mulching: When we installed your perennials, we installed them with a 2" to 3" layer of bark or shredded bark mulch. It is a good idea to re-mulch your perennial beds periodically to maintain the 2" to 3" layer. The mulch is used to retain soil moisture, add organic matter to the soil, and keep weeds under control. Hand weed your perennial beds as necessary to keep them weed free. Use weed preventers and weed control products according to label to assist reducing the labor intensive hand weeding

SHRUBS GARDEN BEDS (Mulched or Stone)

Watering: New shrubs will need to be watered periodically, usually 1 to 2 times per week when they are newly planted and trying to establish themselves. To determine if shrubs need watering, stick your finger 3" down into the soil. If the soil is moist, do not water. If the soil is dry, water.

Mulching/Weeding: We recommend maintaining a 3"-4" layer mulch around your shrubs and in your shrub beds. Re-mulching will be required on a regular basis, usually once per year. Recommended is a shredded bark mulch product which retains moisture in the soil, keeps the root system cool and reduces weeds. Hand weeding your shrub beds regularly will be necessary to keep it weed free. Use chemical weed preventers and weed control products according to label to assist in reducing the labor intensive hand weeding. If you have stone mulch in your shrub beds or maintenance border it will not be necessary to redress on regular basis. Hand weeding, chemical weed control

Pruning out organic debris is all that is necessary. You may have to redress if you lose stones after several years.

Fertilizing: Shrubs will not need any fertilizer for the first year. After the first year they can be fertilized with a high quality granular shrub and tree fertilizer once a year in early spring or late fall after growth has stopped. Growing usually stops by November. Broadleaf evergreen shrubs such as Rhododendrons, Pieris, Azaleas, Mountain Laurel, etc. can be fertilized again during the growing season soon after flowering. During the growing season do not fertilize shrubs after the end of August so the plants will have time to harden off before winter sets in.

Pruning: New shrubs were pruned as necessary at the time of planting. Very little, if any, pruning will be necessary during the first year. During the first year, remove any dead branches or any wayward branches that do not conform to the natural shape of the shrub. After the first year, routine pruning will be needed to maintain the health and aesthetic qualities of your shrubs. Proper pruning techniques are much too extensive to mention here. Garden centers and bookstores have many good books on pruning.

TREES

Watering: Your new trees were watered in at the time of planting but will need periodic watering throughout the first 1 to 3 years of establishment. To determine if the tree needs water, stick your finger into the soil about 3". If the soil is moist, do not water. If the soil is dry, water. Trees generally take longer to establish their roots than shrubs.

Mulching: We recommend maintaining a mulch ring around trees planted in lawn areas for at least three years after planting. The mulch rings should have 3" to 4" of shredded bark mulch product which retains moisture in the soil, keeps the root system cool, and prevents lawn maintenance equipment from damaging or scarring the tree.

Wrapping: New trees should be tree wrapped every year in late fall until their trunks reach 4" to 5" in diameter. This tree wrap must be removed each spring after last frost. The tree wrap prevents sap from flowing up the tree's conductive tissue on warm sunny winter and early spring days. It must be prevented because during this time of year, rising sap will freeze and cause the bark and trunk of the tree to explode causing injury and in some instances even death of your new tree. Trees with small trunk diameters and thin barks are especially susceptible to this type of damage.

Staking: If your trees were staked adjust guy wires as necessary to keep taught and tree straight. Guy wires can be easily adjusted by twisting the wire in one direction to tighten and the other to loosen. This is best achieved with a large screw driver wedged between the two wires acting as a lever. After one year remove the stakes and guy wires. This very important, if the wires are left on too long they will girdle (choke) the tree as the trunk of the tree grows larger killing your new tree.

Fertilizing: New trees do not need to be fertilized for the first year after planting. After the first year, fertilize the tree one time per year with a high quality shrub and tree fertilizer. The best time to do this is early spring or late fall (after tree has hardened off). If you forget, you can do it any time during summer up until the end of July.

Pruning: New trees will need very little, if any, pruning for first couple of years after planting. During this time only prune out the dead or dying branches or lower branches that may be in the way of pedestrian traffic. Also prune out branches as necessary to prevent ones that are crossing over and rubbing each other.

These are basic, general care instructions to get you started. We highly recommend purchasing a good book on gardening and plant care to assist you in maintaining your new landscape. Also, please feel free to call us if you have any questions.