

BestYard BestNews

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For Lawn and Landscape

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Owner's Corner

By Chris

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I would like to thank all of our customers that made it possible for us to earn the “Best in Parker” award for lawn and garden service. By allowing us to service your lawn and garden, you allowed us to show you how much we care and want you to have the best looking yard in the neighborhood. Visit our website to see our new award. We are very excited.

Now that the freezing weather has hit us, we are officially ending our mowing services for the season. We are also kicking off our sprinkler blowouts and fall cleanups. If you haven't gotten on our schedule for those services, don't hesitate to call us.

In addition to preparing your sprinklers for winter, you also need to get your plants and lawn ready for winter. If we don't have you on the schedule for BestCare and winterizing your

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Turf Care

By Steve

Winter watering is a necessity in Colorado!

Just because summer is done and sprinkler systems are being shut down doesn't mean we're finished with watering lawns. Denver is known as an arid (aka desert) climate. Lawns facing south to west especially if they slope are susceptible to winter kill.

Winter is a time when the grass goes dormant. This happens due to temperature but also because there is no more watering being done. The grass treats it as drought and the blades go brown. The roots are still active and growing underground. Any moisture the grass receives is taken into the roots to keep them alive. If the moisture is insufficient, then the roots die which in turn kills the grass blades which is called winter kill.

Winter kill can be mostly avoided by winter watering. It's easy to do and

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*“Denver is known as an
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climate.”*

Landscape Maintenance

By Laurie

Fall is definitely here. We have had a few frosty mornings. Now, it is time to clean up the flower beds and pots, and remove the dead annuals. I recommend discarding all the dead plant material along with the old potting soil. Don't try to reuse the soil for next year. The old soil is usually depleted of nutrients, full of fertilizer salts and may harbor insects or diseases. I also recommend cleaning the pots as well. Give them a good scrub and rinse with a 10% solution of bleach to kill molds, insect eggs, and diseases. Store the pots upside down in the garage or any place out of the weather to prevent freezing and cracking. Flower beds can be prepped for the winter by turning the top 10 inches of soil. This will aerate the soil as well as expose any overwintering insects. You can toss a layer of compost over the beds at this time or in the spring.

Another fall gardening project is to cut back most of the perennials. I have seen powdery mildew on Shasta daisy, veronica and monarda. By cutting back these plants you will remove most of the powdery mildew which is a common mold in the air and soil. There are some perennials that I do not cutback and, instead, leave the flower heads for the birds and for winter interest. Finches, chickadees, and pine siskins will eat the seeds of the cone flowers and rudbeckias. I will warn you that there may be many new seedlings sprouting all over your garden next spring.

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landscape and plants then call us immediately. It is very important for us to help you protect your plants and lawn for this winter season.

We are also doing our annual holiday lighting quotes and schedules as well. So if you would like us to help you hang holiday lights on your house and/or trees call the office to get on my schedule. Let's end this year on a beautiful and bright note and light up your home so you can have the best lighted house in the neighborhood.

Keep an eye out for future information on what great things we are going to do to kick off the 2010 season.

Thank you,

"The old soil is usually depleted of nutrients..."

Mowing

By Steve

The mowing season is almost over. Soon it will be time to put the mowers away and get the snow shovels out.

Think about your last mow of the season and realize that while a little shorter is okay, scalping will cause more problems than it solves.

The object of cutting the grass a little shorter on the final mow is to keep it from laying over on itself when it snows. This in turns allows proper air circulation which helps dry the grass so that snow mold cannot get a hold and do damage. 2-2 1/2" high after the mow should be enough to keep the blades standing straight up.

There are two main types of snow mold, gray and pink. Pink snow mold is the more common type but is also the easier to treat normally.

Snow mold generally occurs where snow has been piled up and is sitting for long periods of time pushing the grass down. The grass will be matted against each other. It may look wet or greasy but even if it doesn't it will help if you get the blades of grass to stand up. Mycelium may also be present which looks like white cottony material.

That's the easy part. Use a leaf rake and lightly rake the grass until it's standing up and air can circulate and dry it out. This may have to be repeated a few times during the year but should keep things clear. If needed fungicides can be used but normally are not needed.

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really helps the grass.

Water every 2-4 weeks of no significant precipitation (rain or snow). Choose a day that is warm, 50° or higher. Start watering early in the day to give the water enough time to soak into the ground before it freezes at night. You can hand water or use a hose and sprinkler. Don't overdo it, 10-15 minutes every 3-4 weeks will be enough and should keep your lawn healthy. South facing lawns might need watering every 2-3 weeks due to the hotter temperatures they reach.

This is also the time to plan for mites. Mites are very small. In fact, they look like dust specks that move. The problem comes in that they are very good at multiplying! They favor south facing slopes but any lawn with a south to west exposure is in danger of being attacked. They are a puncture & suck insect which means they puncture the cell wall and suck out the juices. Do this enough and the grass dies. They can do massive damage in a short period of time and because they work in the winter months they aren't even noticed until the grass starts to turn green in most cases.

Plan now and treat for them in November and again in February. If you wish to have us do it, call and get scheduled now.



Pink Snow Mold.

"Mites are very small. In fact, they look like dust specks that move."

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Other plants that have winter interest are Russian sage, butterfly bush, and ornamental grasses. These plants add texture and movement to an otherwise barren winter garden. Just remember to cut them back in the spring before they start to green up.

Irrigation

By Jeff

If you haven't already scheduled your sprinkler blowout or you are scheduled late in the season, you may want to take a simple precaution to avoid damage to your sprinkler system.

If it looks like the temperature will drop below freezing make sure that you wrap your backflow preventer to avoid breakage. The backflow preventer is the most vulnerable part of your sprinkler system since it is the most exposed.

Wrapping is easy. Use an old blanket, sleeping bag, or similar item and wrap the backflow preventer and pipes coming out of the house and going into the ground. Secure it with tape and then cover it with a large garbage bag. Tape that closed over the blanket.

This will help protect from freezes but is not a substitute or guarantee that your system will not freeze. If it gets cold enough or stays cold long enough the system can still freeze and have damage. The only sure thing is having your system winterized that removes the water to prevent freezing.



Common types of backflow preventer



Frozen Pipes Cost \$\$



News & Information Spotlight

By Steve

Parker - I find this site really interesting, I know I posted it before but there is just so much on it you have to see for yourself.

<http://www.parkercolorado.net/>

Castle Rock - Visit the Castle Rock View and watch some neat videos.

<http://www.crgov.com/Page.asp?NavID=538>

Aurora - A lot of information from Living with Coyotes to Trick or Treat Nature Trail plus more!

<http://www.auroragov.org/AuroraGov/index.htm>

Highlands Ranch - The Messenger Online

http://www.highlandsranch.org/01_home/01_pdf_files/CurrentMessenger.pdf

Denver - Halloween for Kids! Get the information here!

<http://www.denver.org/what-to-do/attractions/halloween-for-kids>

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