



The Guys In Purple
GREENUP
 Lawns and Landscapes
 Nutrient Management & Pest Control Programs
 For Lawns & Landscapes

Q and A

Last winter I noticed bark injury on some of my trees and shrubs (it looked like something had been feeding on them). I don't want it to happen again this winter. Do you know what I can do to prevent this?

The injury you're describing may have been caused by animals such as mice, voles or rabbits feeding on your trees and shrubs. They tend to feed on the bark and young stems of ornamental and fruiting plants when their normal food supply is covered with snow. Landscape plants at risk for this type of damage include the following:

- Apple
- Hawthorn
- Crabapple
- Euonymus
- Roses
- Viburnum
- Barberry
- Mountain ash

The wounds created from feeding activity make it possible for borers and disease to enter plants. When feeding damage is especially severe, plant death can occur.

To prevent feeding damage in the future, you might consider protecting vulnerable trees and shrubs with plastic collars placed around trunks and stems. Rodent repellents can also be used (these are sprayed or painted on trunks and stems).



Dormant Pruning Keeps Trees in Top Shape

Professional pruning is one of the best things that can be done for your trees to keep them healthy. And pruning in the fall or winter, when your trees are dormant, is even better.

Dormant pruning can help your trees to hold up better under harsh winter conditions. Plus, it can help to prevent minor problems from becoming big ones by removing decaying, diseased or dead branches. Younger trees benefit from dormant pruning too, since it helps them to maintain proper shape for healthier, more attractive growth.

Why Wait Until Trees Are Dormant?

The dormant season is the best time to prune woody plants. Pruning cuts made during this time close and heal more quickly. Also, when certain species (such as fruit and elm trees) are cut during the growing season, they can attract insects that carry disease or fungus...so pruning them while dormant is better.

It's More Practical Too

Once leaves have dropped, it's easier to see what needs to be done for a faster, more effective job. With the ground frozen or hard, there's less of a chance of lawn damage. And since cooler weather reduces outdoor activity for most homeowners, dormant pruning is less disruptive to your schedule.

All trees can benefit from pruning when the time is right, and the dormant season is definitely the right time!



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It's Been a Great Year!

We've been incredibly busy this year caring for all of our valued customers, and that's just how we like it. We really appreciate being your partner when it comes to caring for your corner of the earth.

This time of year is perfect for thinking about your future needs. Just give us a call – we'll be happy to answer any questions you may have and provide suggestions for the upcoming growing season. It's never too early to schedule next year's services. And no matter what the season, we're always here to provide the professional, prompt and courteous service you deserve.

We thank you for your business, and we look forward to serving you in 2008!

Take Cabling Under Consideration

Winter will be here before you know it, and that means winter storms will be back again soon. Snow, ice and high winds can all cause severe damage to trees, and cabling is a great way to prevent this type of damage.

Cabling reinforces weak limbs and V-shaped forks by redistributing the weight of the plant. Heavy bolts in one or more locations on each limb, with cables pulled tightly between the two limbs, add strength to the tree to help it withstand sudden breakage.



Cabling adds strength to trees, helping them to stand up to snow, ice and wind damage.

Remember that cabling's greatest value is as a preventative measure. After all, once major limbs have broken away from a tree, there's little choice but removal. And too often, the trees most damaged are the focal point of a property.

If you're concerned that your valuable trees may be at risk of sustaining winter storm damage, it's a good idea to have them evaluated to determine what, if any, cabling measures should be taken.

Q and A

My pine needles are turning brown. What could be causing this?

Browning pine needles can be caused by a variety of factors, including:

- Root damage or death as a result of exceptionally wet springs and hot, dry summers. Improving soil drainage where the pines are planted can help, along with watering in the late fall (especially if the pines are young).
- Desiccation from dry winter winds pulling moisture out of the needles. An application of antidesiccant spray in the fall can form a protective barrier against these winds and help to hold moisture in.
- Fungal diseases such as tip blight, which can be treated with fungicides.
- Bark beetle infestation (if this is the case, pitch may also be flowing from the trunk, and holes might be visible in the trunk as well). Removal and disposal of infested trees may be necessary.

Of course, a professional inspection of your pines is the best way to determine what might be causing the needles to turn brown. Once a diagnosis is made, the proper steps can be taken toward recovery.





Did You Know?

Herbs vs. Spices

Have you ever wondered what the difference is between an herb and a spice? For one thing, the edible part of herbs is fresh or dried leaves. The edible part of spices, on the other hand, can take the form of seeds, roots, fruits, flowers or bark. Herbs usually have a mild flavor, while spices are stronger in flavor. Parsley, sage and basil are common herbs. Cinnamon, cardamom and ginger are common spices.

Prepping Your Lawn for Winter

Think your lawn is finished growing for the season? Think again. As the weather turns cooler, your lawn is actually thickening and spreading. Turf roots naturally go into a growth spurt right about now as they convert nutrients into food reserves. In fact, the average lawn's density can increase by as much as 20% during the cooler fall months if there's enough moisture and fertilizer present (and if the soil isn't too compacted).

Setting the Stage for Better Growth

If the following haven't been done already, they should be done as soon as possible:

- Elimination of any fall weeds to avoid competition with your grass
- Opening of the soil with core aeration to relieve soil compaction and help roots thicken
- Application of a heavy dose of fertilizer to encourage new root growth

In addition to the above three steps, all you need to add is water (in the absence of rainfall). Your lawn will reward you with much better looks. Plus, you'll enjoy improved winter color; faster green-up in the spring; and more drought-resistant roots for an all-around healthier lawn!

Turf density can increase by up to 20% during the fall.

Prepping Your Soil: Late-Season Tips

Preparing garden soil with organic amendments is always a good idea. It improves soil structure for better aeration and drainage, and this leads to better plant growth. Fall is a great time to do it, since soil is usually drier and easier to work with at this time of year.

How Much is Enough?

From 3" to 4" of organic amendment will be beneficial. It should be added over the garden soil area, then turned or tilled into the top 8" to 10" of soil.

What's a Good Amendment to Use?

Sphagnum peat moss has long been a popular amendment for garden soils. Since it has a low pH, it can help to lower soil pH as it decomposes. It's very good at holding water too (up to 10 times its dry weight).

Another option is compost, which can also help to increase soil's water-holding capability. Compost is very cost-effective since it can be made at home, but it's important to make sure that it's ready before using it. "Finished" compost is dark in color, crumbly, has an "earthy" smell and is within 10 degrees of the air temperature around it.

Manure can be used too, as long as it's well-aged. Fresh manure isn't recommended since it can be unpleasant to handle and may contain a lot of weed seeds.

Any of these options will make a world of difference in the health and beauty of your garden plants next year!





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Green Up follows the Virginia Nutrient Management Standards and Criteria established by The Department of Conservation and Recreation. Our participation demonstrates our commitment to protecting Virginia's environment while providing responsible lawn care service.

Here Come the Pests!

Cold weather is on its way, and insect pests will soon be seeking shelter from the elements by trying to get inside your home. Some will enter through open doors or holes in window screens, but even more may come in through untreated openings that you don't even think about. Cracks in the foundation, loose dryer vents, partially open mortar joints, loose-fitting window frames, drains, sump pumps or any other openings from the outside can all give insects access to your home.

Battling an infestation of pests can be frustrating, expensive and time-consuming. But a barrier treatment applied this fall can help to avoid these problems. By having a barrier treatment applied to all possible points of entry, you can rest assured that those pesky insects will stay outside where they belong!

Don't let insects bug you over the winter...have a barrier treatment applied this fall!



Kwik Klips for Fall

- Wondering what to do with those leaves after raking them from your lawn? Consider working them into your garden soil or adding them to your compost pile!
- If rainfall is scarce, remember that your lawn will benefit from extra watering this fall. 1" to 1 ½" per week will be very helpful.
- It's a good idea to add a layer of mulch to your landscape plantings after the first hard freeze. This will help to keep the soil temperature more consistent through winter for extended root growth.
- Keep that mower handy! Mowing should continue until your grass has stopped growing for the season.
- If you have a water garden, you can keep leaves out of it this fall by covering it with netting.

