



BEINING NURSERY & LANDSCAPING, LLC

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CARING FOR YOUR NEW LANDSCAPE

WATERING

The majority of the problems people experience with their new landscape plants, involve improper watering. The information below should help you avoid these problems.

Our plants love hot weather as long as they get enough water during and **IMMEDIATELY** after installation. Begin **“flooding in”** all of your new plants as soon as we’ve finished mulching, being careful not to skip any. No one has ever killed their plants by giving them too much water the first week. We have found the following procedure to work the best.

1. Gather enough garden hose to reach all the plants and remove any sprayer type attachments.
2. Adjust some water at full flow to all the plants as quickly as possible, taking care not to let the water wash mulch and soil away from their base.
3. Then adjust the water to about ½ of full flow and lay the end of the hose at the base of each plant and let it run for about 5-15 min. before moving it to the next plant.

The exact amount of time required varies somewhat, according to the size of the plant, how close together the plants are spaced, and how level the planting area is. The entire planting bed should be saturated and excess water running out into the lawn if you’ve done this properly. This procedure should be repeated in 3-4 days.

Keep plants damp for the first two weeks, then reduce watering to once a week or less depending on precipitation. **FEEL THE SOIL BELOW THE MULCH. IF IT IS DAMP, DON’T WATER.** The soil around the plants should feel dry for several days before you need to water again. Soak when you do water, but don’t water again until dry. Make sure you check plants on different sides of the house, in raised bed areas, and low areas. Some plants may need watered when other don’t. Over watering landscape plants after the initial “soak in” is a common cause of plant decline and death.

Only water when absolutely necessary, but soak’em when you do. Pay special attention in the hot summer months and in early winter prior to the ground freezing. After the first year, watering may only be necessary during extended summer dry periods and perhaps in early winter depending on precipitation. Whenever you water, slow thorough soaking as described above is preferred. Frequent light sprinkling tends to spread plant diseases.

TREE STAKES AND WRAPPING

If we installed trees in your landscape, they may or may not be staked and/or have paper tree wrapping on the trunk. Trees are most likely to blow crooked in the first month or so after they are installed or in the spring when the soil is soft and wet. The hose/straps and wire fastening the tree to the stake can sometimes cause problems. The trunks of some fast growing species can begin to grow around the hose/straps in 6-8 months. If this is allowed to happen, **IT WILL RESULT IN PERMANENT DAMAGE TO THE TREE.** You must periodically check this and readjust when needed. Remove the hose/straps and wire when the tree appears rigid enough to remain upright on its own (6-12 mo.) The stakes can be left in place until you're sure they are no longer needed. The paper wrapping helps prevent sun scald and frost cracking. This usually can occur from mid-winter to early spring. Leave the wrapping on through this period. It is best to reapply trunk wrapping for the next several winters.

WEED CONTROL AND MULCHING

During the installation of your landscape, we have taken several steps to eliminate the existing weeds and to prevent new weed growth; however, some new weed growth will eventually occur. When this happens, hand pulling a few small weeds is the safest and easiest method. If the covering of mulch wears thin and the soil begins to show on the surface, more persistent weed problems will occur. We recommend applying additional mulch every other year to help keep weed problems to a minimum. Maintaining a 2"-3" layer of mulch not only controls weeds but is also very important for holding moisture in the soil for the plants. We also carry several pre-emergent herbicides that you can apply to help control weeds. For stubborn weeds that are actively growing, Roundup herbicide can be sprayed or wiped on to eradicate them. **EXTREME CARE MUST BE TAKEN NOT TO GET ROUNDUP ON YOUR DESIRABLE PLANTS.**

PRUNING

HEAVY TRIMMING IN MID SUMMER AND EVEN MODERATE TRIMMING IN THE FALL OFTEN CAUSES PERMANENT DAMAGE TO LANDSCAPE PLANTS. Pruning can stimulate the plant into a state of rapid, tender growth. Heavy pruning and trimming in summer or early fall could cause this growth at a time when the plant should be shutting down for the season. An untimely or extended hard freeze could then cause damage to the plant. Since damage from late trimming isn't noticeable until the following spring, people often don't realize this caused damage to their plants. Pruning prior to or during the growing season, however, will allow plant tissue damaged in the pruning process to heal as quickly as possible, thus reducing the likelihood of insect and disease infections. Generally, prune evergreens in early spring or summer; spring flowering plants like lilac, viburnum, forsythia and crabapple right after they bloom; and summer flowering plants like spireas, roses and Rose of Sharon early in the spring. Most perennials should be cut to the ground in late fall after the foliage completely dies or in early spring before new growth emerges. Most ornamental grasses should be cut to within 3"- 6" of the ground in early spring.

For best appearance and health of the plant, prune to maintain the natural shape. Pruning individual branches with a hand pruner (when practical) is more attractive and healthier for the plants than using a hedge shears.

FERTILIZING

We take great care to properly prepare the soil, plant, prune, and mulch your plants to insure optimal health and growth. Most of the plants we install are fertilized at the nursery with a slow-release fertilizer that lasts all growing season. This is usually sufficient. **OVER FERTILIZING CAN DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD.** Occasionally, a plant may show signs of a nutrient deficiency after installation. In this case do not use dry fertilizers, but rather, a water soluble product like our Fertilome Acid Loving Formula or Miracle Grow's Miracid that you mix with water and apply to the plant. A couple of applications are usually all it takes.

PEST PROBLEMS

Believe it or not, rabbit damage is probably one of the worst pest problems we encounter. It usually occurs during the winter when there is little else for them to eat. Rabbits prefer tender new twigs and branches, therefore, as plants mature they become less vulnerable. There are repellents we have available that seem to work with limited success. Wrapping the affected plants with wire mesh seems to be the most effective.

Dogs urinating on shrubs are sometimes a problem. Cats who choose your young tree as a scratching post can be a serious problem too.

Insects and plant diseases can sometimes be a concern in new or established plants; however, insects and diseases are present at certain levels all the time and are normally kept in check by factors working in nature. Often times other factors related to growing conditions cause plant stress. **STRESSED PLANTS ARE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO INSECTS AND DISEASE.** Simply spraying something may or may not help. If it seems to be serious, collect a sample and bring it to us to look at, or take a sample to your county extension office for identification.

WINTER PROTECTION

The vast majority of plants we install are intended to be cold hardy in this region and therefore require little or no additional winter protection. However, there are a few simple things you can do in some situations. If we have little precipitation in the fall and early winter, watering before the ground freezes can prevent winter injury (especially evergreens). An adequate layer of mulch buffers the root systems from quick changes in temperature. Protect the trunks on young trees with paper wrapping or rodent guards and take precautions to protect shrubs from rabbit damage the first few years when necessary. We have also found that some of the shrub roses can benefit from being covered during severe winters. (Cover them late and remove covers early.)

Note: For more information about caring for your landscape, visit www.beiningnursery.com. There are additional reference documents available for your use in both the "Resources" and "Calendar" sections of our website.