

Maintaining A Healthy Landscape

WATERING

Landscape plants should be watered once or twice a week during the first year, except when it rains more than 1” at a time. When watering, place the hose at the base of the plant and allow the water to slowly soak into the ground. Be sure to thoroughly wet the root ball and the entire planting hole. Then move the hose around the plant to guarantee a uniform application. Remember, plants installed in the spring may not need to be watered as often due to the abundance of rain. But during dry summer months and into the fall it’s critical that you deep water twice a week as necessary.

- * Be careful not to over water, especially in poor draining soils. Over-watering can drown the roots. Only water when the soil immediately under the surface feels dry.
- * Between the first and third years, continue to monitor drought stress of your new trees and shrubs. Water as necessary using the above watering schedule until the weather improves.

MULCHING

Benefits of mulching include having better control over weeds, erosion, soil temperature and water retention—all beneficial for root growth. After planting, place a 2-3” layer of organic mulch (bark mulch) over the root zone or bed area. When mulching, take care not to pile mulch against the base of the plant because it increases risk of disease and insect damage.

WEEDING

Weeds are unwanted plants in the landscape. These should be removed as they compete with desirable landscape plants for water, nutrients and sunlight. Weeds can also harbor many diseases and pests that damage your landscape plants.

Keep in mind that weeds should be removed as soon as they appear. Even the best-prepared bed has them. If weeds are allowed to spread, especially in perennial or groundcover beds, they can become very difficult and expensive to control. Worst of all, weeds significantly reduce the health of your ornamental plants.

- * If you choose to use an herbicide, read the label carefully and apply only when the wind is minimal (early mornings or evenings are best). This prevents herbicide drift, which can injure or kill your ornamentals. Before using an herbicide, properly identify the weed because not all herbicides kill all weeds.

FERTILIZING

We fertilize all plants with a starter fertilizer at the time of planting, so no further fertilizer application is necessary in the first year. A light application is recommended the second and third years to help the plant become established. But avoid excessive fertilization and always use the manufacturer’s recommendations when applying any chemical. Acid-loving plants like rhododendrons and azaleas prefer an acid-loving fertilizer such as holly tone. Tree tone is great for trees and shrubs. Plant tone and flower tone are a good choice for perennials.