Spring

Maintenance · https://sargentsgardens.com/docs/spring/

Spring is that magical time of year where we leave the sub-zero temps behind and life bursts forth from its winter slumber. It’s a time when we are all anxious to get out of the house and enjoy the warming weather. Lucky for us, it’s also a great time for landscape maintenance! The following is a list of advice to keep your lawn, trees, and landscape beds looking their best.

Landscape Beds

After the long winter, there’s a good change your landscape beds look a little rough around the edges. The following is a checklist to get your garden looking its best.

- Remove leaves and other debris and refresh mulch to a depth of 2-3"
- Trim Perennials to 4” from soil and prune back vines.
- Apply a pre-emergent herbicide, such as Preen Weed Preventer, and begin weeding early to minimize issues later in the season.

At this time of the year, plants are tolerant of disturbances. Use this opportunity to amend your soil with organic matter, divide any overcrowded perennials, and plant for summer color. This includes bulbs and annuals.

Trees and Shrubs

The focus of tree/shrub maintenance in the spring is death and disease. After you remove any winter protection (if applicable), prune back any dead, broken, or diseased branches. Any summer blooming shrubs can also be pruned for shape at this time of year.

Any fungal disease identified the previous year should be treated now. Fungicide timing is critical and is best applied when new growth has emerged to approximately half its eventual leaf size (or candle size for evergreens). The application should be repeated 2 weeks later. Always follow the safety precautions outlined on the product label. Sargent’s Graden Centers stock an assortment of anti-fungal products.

Lawn

Good spring lawn care can set you up for success all year long. Dethatching and spring fertilizer should be completed in May as your lawn begins to actively grow and the threat of snow has passed. This will also help you identify any problem areas or winter damage. These areas can be fixed by overseeding or topdressing with amendments.

How to overseed your lawn:

1. Mow and rake the lawn. You want the grass seed to have good contact with the soil. Mow your grass shorter than normal and bag any clippings. After mowing, rake the lawn to remove any other debris and loosen the soil.

2. Amend the soil to adjust for the soil and damage type. For example, a brown lawn due to winter salt should be treated with gypsum.

3. Apply the grass seed. Depending on the area being seeded, seed can be applied by hand or by spreader. You can also mix the grass seed with a small amount of dirt to improve soil contact and top dress uneven areas. Spread this top-dressing mixture with shovel and rake.

4. Apply fertilizer to give your new seed a head start. Fertilizing the entire yard at this point to save time!

5. Water the grass seed in the morning with a slow, long soak. Too much water can wash seeds away. If there are pools of water, cut back. Using a sprinkler rather than a hose can help with this. Continue to water regularly until grass is mowing height.

Applying crabgrass control in early spring can help stop crabgrass before it becomes a problem. Keep in mind that a general pre-emergent herbicide will not allow ANY grass seed to germinate including overseed. Therefore, a crabgrass specific treatment is recommended. Visit a Sargent’s Garden Center for product recommendation.