

Maintenance Instructions

1. Spring clean up of plants should be performed in conjunction with clean up of your lawn areas. Carefully clean all leaves in and around plants by hand. If not done carefully; bruised or broken branches will show up later. Surface leaves in established ground cover beds (1 full year) should be raked lightly off the top with a leaf rake. Newer beds should be left alone with the exception of small areas where it is practical to pick them out by hand. Prune all dead branches just below the dead wood. This cleanliness is important for the health of plants.
2. Only cultivate beds where new annuals or perennials will be placed. To cultivate, mulch should be tilled into the beds. The surface should be re-mulched and annuals and perennials planted. Tiling in shrubbery beds does more harm than good. These areas should be mulched lightly in the Spring to protect plants from drought, heat and weeds. A little mulch now will save a lot of weeding later.
3. Most trees and shrubs can be fertilized with Holly Tone in granular form. Application should be compared to feeding chickens, being careful not to get the fertilizer on the plant foliage. Nitrogen is a water seeking chemical and will draw moisture from the leaves resulting in burning, or possibly even death, of the plant. Fertilizing too close to the trunk of the plant is also dangerous. The drip line of the plant should be the target area. Ground cover should be broadcast and then immediately soaked with water to remove fertilizer from the foliage.
4. Granular application as just described should be applied once in late March or early April. Any other fertilizer should be done in May, June or early July with water soluble fertilizers (e.g. Miracle Gro or Miracid). These can be applied weekly or monthly as long as plants are adequately watered between applications. When applying liquid fertilizers, use a sprinkling can and soak the ground thoroughly (not just the foliage). Fertilization should not be done after September 1st. This would force tender growth which could be severely injured during the winter.
5. Pruning your plants should be done on a scheduled basis. Prune lightly in the Spring (March or April) before plants start to grow. A second heavy pruning is best after July 1st when all new growth is completed. A touch up pruning in the Fall makes for a good winter look. Remove dead twigs as they occur. Only hand pruners should be used, not hedge shears. Evergreens can be pruned anytime. Flowering plants should be pruned as soon as the plant has finished blooming.
6. Tree stakes and tree wrap should be removed after the tree has been planted for one year.
7. If you have problems with yellowing azaleas or rhododendrons, please call for instructions.