

Getting Your Yard Ready for Spring

Pruning

Spring pruning of trees and shrubs is done to remove dead wood and reduce plant size or crowded branches. Quality pruners should always be used; Felco or Corona pruners are a fantastic choice - they are sturdy and will last a lifetime.



Be sure pruners are sharp prior to using, and if pruning diseased plant material (ie. Black Knot on Schubert Chokecherry) always bleach pruners between every cut.



Contrary to popular belief, pruning paint does not have to be used; if the cut is clean the wound will be able to heal itself properly. NEVER leave stubs.

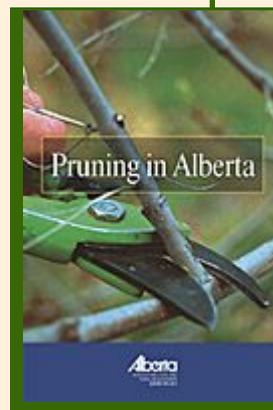
All woody trees and shrubs may be pruned in Spring EXCEPT FOR:

- Do not prune Elm in between March 31st and October 30th to help reduce the spread of Dutch Elm Disease. Prune Maple and Birch after leaves unfurl - otherwise, if

they are pruned too early, they will bleed sap.

- Prune Spring flowering shrubs such as lilac after they bloom. If they are pruned before they bloom, you are removing this year's flower buds.

As a general rule, prune no more than 1/3rd of the plant at a time. For further details, "Pruning in Alberta" is an excellent reference book published by Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades. \$5.99



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Fertilizing

There are granular, water soluble, slow release and liquid fertilizers. The many varieties include fertilizers for lawns, trees/shrubs, annuals, perennials and vegetables.

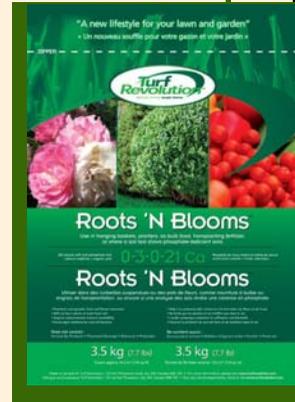
The three numbers always refer to the following elements in the same order all the time.

Nitrogen – encourages growth of leaves, stems and helps the plants to 'green' up.

Phosphorous – encourages root development & flowers.

Potassium – all around growth, helps plants ward off disease.

In early spring before plants are actively growing a handful of bone meal or Roots n Blooms can be applied at the base of each perennial or shrub and lightly tilled into the soil. These slow release fertilizers will slowly break down and give plants an initial boost of nutrients before they are vigorously pushing new growth.



Preparing Soil

Before planting it's imperative to ensure your soil has appropriate drainage and nutrients. To ensure drainage, incorporate LOTS of organic material (if none has been added) such as compost, Sea Soil, peat moss. This improves aeration, drainage and adds nutrients. If soil is exceptionally hard with lots of clay, till in Zeolite; this granular product is derived from volcanic rock and not only breaks down clay but adds nutrients.

To ensure good nutrients, first test your soil to determine what may or may not be lacking. Greenland carries Turf Revolution Soil Test Kits which



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you fill with soil and mail away. Within 7 days an in-depth analysis arrives providing you with easy to follow recommendations on the nutrients required. Soil tests will also test pH; an imbalanced pH - under 6.5 and over 7.5 can hinder the plants ability to absorb nutrients and grow properly.

Lawn Care

When lawn surface has dried and you no longer leave imprints as you walk across the lawn, you can then rake your lawn. Rake away all dead/dry blades and discard, and if you have not done so within the last two years, you can dethatch the lawn area. Aeration can also be done in spring; this can be done every year to improve aeration in your lawn. Make sure all machines/tools for above are DISINFECTED to prevent spread of such diseases as Fairy Ring.

After dethatching and aerating, apply a starter fertilizer such as CIL Golf Green Starter 10-20-5 or Turf Revolution Green Acres 5-1-5. For weed prevention you can also apply Turf Revolution Corn Gluten at this time (do not apply if planning to overseed your lawn).



Pest & Disease Prevention

The following steps are a must to ensure overwintering pests and diseases are eliminated from the garden prior to the upcoming season:

- Rake up (or use a Shop Vac) to remove all leaf debris from under and around plants. Insects and fungal diseases both overwinter in the leaf debris.
- Woody trees, shrubs or vines that experienced insect infestations such as mites, scale, aphids or leafhopper should be sprayed BEFORE LEAFING OUT with Horticultural Oil. Woody trees, shrubs and vines that experienced fungal problems such as powdery mildew or Black Knot should be sprayed with Lime Sulphur BEFORE LEAFING OUT.



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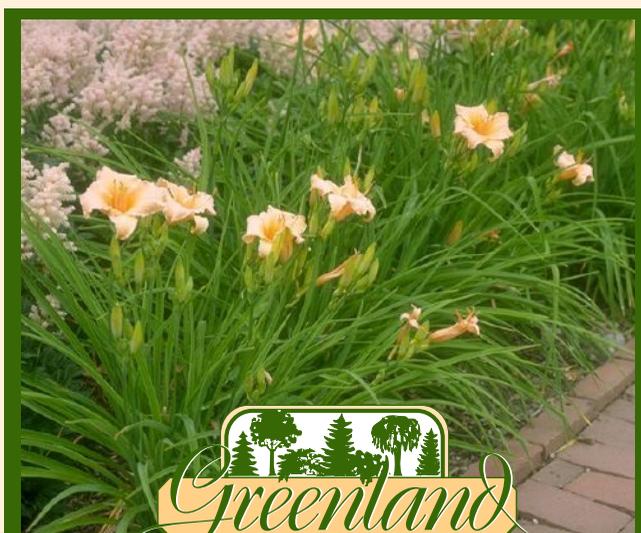
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Perennials

Perennials should all be cut back to approximately 4" above ground. This will make way for new growth emerging from the crown. Many perennials can also be divided at this time. Simply dig up with a sturdy garden fork and split apart into halves or quarters.



For more detailed information, see us at Greenland, call 780 467-7557 or visit our website at greenlandgarden.com. Click on 'Ask An Expert' where you can email us your questions or visit the Helpful Tips section for tip sheets and videos.



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