

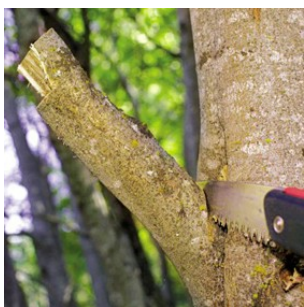
First of the Year

Landscape Tips



The winter holidays are behind us, but we have the remaining winter season still ahead. This season can be harsh to the landscape with freeze damage to plants and turf, but steps can be taken now to help your landscape recover quicker and look its best in the spring.

Tree Pruning

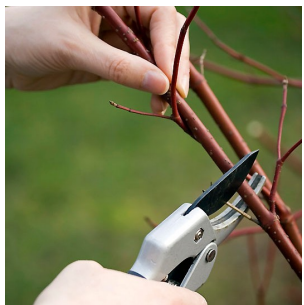


Now is a good time to focus on tree pruning by removing diseased or damaged branches. Ultimately, pruning entails the removal of certain plant parts that are not required, are no longer effective, or that have no use to the plant. By removing such material, energy is redirected to promote the development of new growth. Proper pruning is essential since it enhances the health and beauty of the tree, but improper pruning can have adverse affects.

To prune properly, make sure your equipment is sharp and all cuts are clean and smooth. Also, make sure all cuts are made at a 45 degree angle. This prevents water from collecting in the cut. Do not leave stubs because this is unsightly and creates a “window” for insects and diseases to enter the tree. When pruning mature Crape Myrtles, remove only branch tips and branches that cross within the canopy.

Also, remove any infestations within the tree, such as mistletoe. While this is a fun holiday plant, it is important for it to be removed from trees. Prune infected smaller branches and remove larger branches one foot below the point where the mistletoe is attached.

Perennial Pruning



At this time of year, most perennials are dormant, making it a good time to cut back the dead material. This will help improve the aesthetics of the landscape. Examples of perennials include Lantana, Plumbago, Mexican Heather and Daylily. As mentioned in the tree pruning section, make sure your pruners are sharp and all cuts are clean and smooth.

Winter Annual Weeds



At this time of year, the germination of winter annual weeds is occurring and can be seen emerging from the turf canopy. This can be effectively controlled by spot treating the weed when it is relatively young. While these weeds can be unsightly during the winter, they usually die when the weather gets warmer. But, the warm weather brings about its own type of weeds.

These simple steps can give the active gardener hands-on plant time this winter while also preparing the landscape for a healthy recovery in the spring.