



Fact Sheet

Summer Care For Trees and Shrubs

Watering

Drought stress on trees and shrubs can show up in as few as one or two days, depending on the size of the plants. Recently installed trees and shrubs should be monitored weekly for water needs. Plants that have been installed in turf areas or with drip irrigation may need supplemental watering every two weeks. Plants in non-irrigated areas will need to be watered weekly. In all situations, mulch covering the soil around the base of plants will prevent root balls from excessive drying between watering. Always check the soil moisture before watering. Additional watering information can be found at www.watersaver.org.

Summer Insects

Two primary summer pests are Aphids and Mites. Both insects cause damage to plant leaves by piercing the plant cells and then sucking out the sap. While these pests are very small, their numbers can grow exponentially over time, and the damage they cause will increase stress on plants. While Aphids and Mites alone probably won't kill plants, the injury to the leaves along with other factors (drought, transplant shock) could be very damaging. Evidence of these insects is usually seen in honeydew, a sticky substance found covering anything around the trees. Lady Bugs and other predatory insects feed on these small pests; however in large numbers pesticides will offer greater control. Many different pesticides available through the local home and garden center will control these insects.

Trimming

All landscape plants will be actively growing though the first part of the summer by pushing out leaves, new stems and shoots.

Shrubs

All flowering shrubs should be pruned just after flowering is complete. This will help to control growth and will allow for the flower buds to be set for next spring. Non-flowering shrubs can be pruned to thin or shape at any time. Junipers can be pruned now using many different methods. Natural contour pruning can be done now, but will have a greater affect to control size if the plants have their growth for this year. Junipers that are sheared each year will look their best if sheared now and then again in late summer, reshaping them after the growth for this year has completed.

Trees

Trees can be trimmed any time; however they cannot be shaped like shrubs. Avoid taking the tops out of trees and shaping evergreens. This creates weak plants that are susceptible to storm damage. Thinning and corrective pruning should be done by making proper cuts. A general rule of thumb is to never remove more than 30 percent of the tree when thinning. Small amounts of trimming can be done annually. When major thinning is needed, the results should last for three to five years, if done properly. For information on proper pruning techniques visit www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/garden/07207.html. Plants in the rose family (apples, hawthorns, etc.) should not be pruned at this time. Cuts that absolutely must be made should be done with sterile equipment (a solution of denatured alcohol and water can be used on equipment).

Planting

Trees, shrubs, and flowers can be planted throughout the summer. Many factors should be examined when choosing plants. Factors such as mature size, deciduous or evergreen, and even placement around the house and landscape should be considered when planning your landscaping.

Steps for successful planting:

1. Call for locates: This is a free service and it's always a good idea to have utilities located before digging. Besides, it's the law. Contact Utiliquest at 1-800-922-1987.
2. Hole size: Holes should be one and one half times the diameter of the root ball or the container that is home to the plant.
3. Hole depth: Trees should be planted one to two inches above grade. Shrubs should be at, or slightly above grade. Placing plants at this level will help prevent crown rot, which will eventually cause plant death.
4. Soil amendment: Amend the soil with no more than one third of the total amount removed. Use top soil or peat moss. Mix the soil from the hole and the amendment before backfilling.
5. Remove the container or the basket: Before placing the plant, remove the entire plastic container and at least the top one third of the basket.
6. Gently place the plant into the hole, back fill and water. Make sure the soil settles around the root ball removing all air pockets and voids. Remaining dirt can be used to build a small berm, which will collect extra water, or it can be disposed. The trees should also be staked for one year. Posts should be placed on opposite sides of the tree and have wire and nylon straps to attach to the trunk.

If planting flowers or ground cover around new and or existing plants, do not raise the soil level around the base of the plants. Doing so will increase the chances of crown rot and will eventually cause plant death.