

GROUNDSKEEPER™ NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Issue 1

Another Tough Winter

This is our first newsletter of 2015. It is not news to anyone that this winter was again quite cold and long. We did not have a lot of snow, but we did have a lot in one storm. This snowfall was quite heavy and stayed on the ground for over a month. Due to the weight of the snow, some of your bushes may have been damaged. This could include broken branches from snow, animal damage as they had a tougher time finding food this winter and cold damaged branches on some plant species. As always, GroundsKeeper can help you with your landscaping issues this spring. This includes trimming shrubs to remove damaged branches and to restore their shape, replacing damaged plants and repairing and restoring hardscaping that may need work after this winter. A reminder that we are on Facebook - you can Like us there and find timely information from time to time. Also, if you have any comments, suggestions or requests, please let us know.



GROUNDSKEEPER NEWS

We are expecting a very busy 2015. Our tree services have expanded and you may see us working in Orland Park, or Cook County Forest Preserves removing EAB infested trees. We now have 3 crews performing these functions to augment our 4 landscaping crews. We would also like to welcome Micah Partekel to our team as Office Manager and Kas Wleklinski as our new Operations Manager. John Corrigan will be heading our plant health care operations that includes lawn fertilization, sprinklers and plant treatments. These additions and promotions will continue to allow us to service your properties effectively.

Gardening Tips

EARLY APRIL

- Rake the lawn and remove leaves and twigs
- Check for winter snow and salt damage
- Prevent soil compaction by reducing traffic
- Cut ornamental grasses back to a few inches
- Prepare new planting beds

APRIL / MAY

- Replenish mulch around existing trees
- Monitor trees and shrubs
- Control apple scab with spray at bud break
- Avoid pruning live wood of oaks and elms April through October
- Divide and move perennials as needed



OUR SERVICES

Outdoor Lighting

Ponds

Pavers

Putting Greens

Tree Services

Shrub Pruning

Landscape Design



Winter Effects On Turf

It is quite likely that the heavy snow pack and cold will have a significant impact on your landscaping.

Turf

You will likely see damage to your parkway from salting of the road ways. Additionally, you may have patches of sod that die due to snow mold from the copious snow that we've received. If these patches are less than 6" in diameter they should recover over the course of the year and look better by fall. If the spots are bigger than this you can consider overseeding or patching in sod.

Some overall recommendations follow:

PAVER REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

A second year of winter cold may have caused minor issues with your pavers. The heavy salting on the streets may have left a lot of dirt or salt residue on your pavers. Usually this can be easily cleaned with a power washer. If your pavers have never been sealed, or it has been more than 5 years since they've been sealed, you may want to consider sealing you pavers after cleaning them. There are many different types of sealers on the market (matte finish to wet look, water based, polymer based, joint sand hardening, etc.) Additionally, if you have concrete or pavers you may notice damage to your patio. We are certainly seeing plenty of damage to the roads due to the extreme cold and depth of freezing over the last two years. If you have concrete that is damaged, usually your only option is to replace. On the other hand, if you have pavers and there is heaving or unevenness it is usually repaired very easily. That's a benefit of having pavers. Even if they shift slightly, repairs are usually quick and not extremely expensive. If you have any questions about repairs or about your cleaning and sealing options, please call us at 708-301-7441 to set up an appointment.

MULCH AND SHRUB TRIM TO REDUCE WINTER DAMAGE

You may notice broken branches due to the weight of the snow, damaged branches from animals, or damaged plants due to the cold. In many of these cases proper pruning can rejuvenate the plants and allow them to fully recover in a year or two. Remember that the best time to trim shrubs is in the winter (when they are not snow covered of course). During that time, pruning does not stress your plants and allows you to easily identify the proper structure.

Proper mulching will also help your plants. In the wild, plants usually have a mulch layer of leaves, dead grass, etc. Mulching helps to recreate that environment in your landscape and is more attractive than a layer of dead leaves and grass. This mulch layer insulates the plant's root system. This helps your plants survive the extreme weather that occurs in the winter.

Proper shrub trimming and mulch will give your plants the best chance to survive (and look good) after the harsh weather that Chicago winters bring.

GROUNDSKEEPER™

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Grounds Keeper

Landscape Design • Installation • Maintenance • Tree Care

First, do not apply large amounts of nitrogen fertilizer first thing in the spring. Heavy applications of nitrogen fertilizer in the spring can cause serious lawn problems. Weeds and crabgrass may be a bigger problem this spring if your turf has been damaged because the weeds will be able to out compete your grass. Crabgrass generally begins germinating around the beginning of May, so a target date of the beginning to mid-April is a good time to put

down pre-emergent herbicides that prevent weed seeds from germinating. Pre-Emergence crabgrass herbicides need to be put down prior to crabgrass germination to work, so it's better to apply slightly early rather than too late, but don't put them on in March. Once we reach the middle of May, you will be able to accurately assess the visible damage to your turf. At this time we can help you determine whether seeding or installing new sod is the proper course of action. Additionally, we continue to recommend proper watering (about 1" per week), mowing (3" or higher) and aeration in order to develop a stronger, deeper root system.



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