

GROUNDSKEEPER™ NEWSLETTER

Volume 7, Issue 1

Spring is Here Again

This is our first newsletter of 2016. This winter was milder than the last few years. The ground froze for only a couple of weeks and our moisture mostly came in the way of rain. This is likely to lead to more insect issues than normal. While your grass is greening up earlier than normal, you will also see weeds earlier as well. You may have noticed that your plants are leafing out earlier than the past few years - we sprayed crabapples almost one full month earlier than last year. If you spray your own crabapples for apple scab you should have already sprayed. If not, you are spraying too late! GroundsKeeper will be happy to 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 2016 and are off to a busy start. I would like to congratulate Jessica Mangrum for her promotion to Office Manager. Additionally, we would like to welcome Paul Fish as our Operations Manager. John Corrigan will continue to lead our plant health care operations that include 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



Landscape Lighting

Properly designed landscape lighting can add curb appeal and increase the value of your home. People often consider lighting for security, but it can be used to enhance the appearance of your landscaping and/or increase its functionality.

When designing outdoor lighting I focus on several things. First, I try to use indirect lighting so that the fixtures are barely visible whenever possible.

In backyards, I like to enhance the landscaping elements such as patios, walks, and decks. Most of the patios we install now incorporate outdoor low-voltage lighting. Customer after customer tell us how the lighting com-



pletes the patio project. In addition, I make sure that steps and walkways have lighting that improves safety and security by eliminating dark areas of the yard.

A well lit front of your house will stand out at night in your neighborhood and add to its nighttime curb appeal. I often enhance the façade of the home and especially focus on accent areas (such as stone) if they exist. Also, walkways can be lit with indirect or direct lighting.

In both the front and back yard, lighting trees can have a dramatic effect. The light inside the canopy and reflecting onto nearby elements enhance the look of your house at night.

Remember, when the job is complete, it is the lighting effect that is the most important feature of your lighting, not the fixture. With that said, the fixtures are in an outdoor environment so you want to use fixtures that are high quality with connections that are waterproof.

If you are interested in a lighting design and quote, please call us to set up an appointment at 708-301-7441.

The Right Plants for the Right Places

When designing your landscaping and installing new plants it is very important to put the right plant in the right place.

Size: First and foremost consider the mature size of the plant. I can't tell you how many times I've seen a 30' tall, 20' wide tree planted 5' from the house. It doesn't take a landscape designer to know that this situation will cause problems. Many of our customers want to continue trimming back trees and shrubs to keep them smaller than they naturally grow. In this situation, if possible, install smaller plants to reduce maintenance.

Soil/Moisture: When planting consider whether the area is dry or wet. Conditions are usually not perfect and there are plants that thrive in wet conditions (e.g. River Birch, Dogwood, Iris) as well as those that tolerate dry conditions (Ginko, Spirea, Russian Sage). Also, it is important to consider the type of soil. Most of us have soil with high clay content. Contrary to popular belief, clay is not all bad (it's better for your foundations, hardscaping, etc), but it can be rough on some plant species.

Sun: This is also critical. While most plants like at least some sun, there are plants that love full shade. These will usually burn and dry up in the sun (hosta).

When in doubt, you can look at existing landscaping in your neighborhood and observe the plants you like that are doing well. Take note if they are wet (low lying) areas, in the sun or shade, etc. This will give you a good idea about what will work in your yard.

Of course, you can always call us to help. If you have any questions or would like us to provide landscaping options for your yard, please call us at 708-301-7441 to set up an appointment.



Relax on your new Unilock® patio!



GROUNDSKEEPER™

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