

IN YOUR GARDEN WINTERIZE NOW

During the heat of the summer it's always refreshing to think about the winter, with its cold winds, ice, and sub-zero temperatures. These cool thoughts may also remind you of the detrimental effect a severe winter - like last winter - can have on our ornamental plants.

It's not too early to start preparing for next winter, says Donna Peterson Detrick, Summer Horticulturist, University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service, Rolling Meadows. And a few precautionary steps can reduce the chances for damage.

First make sure your plants have plenty of water. If there is an extended period of dry weather, soak the plants deeply every two to three weeks. To soak - turn on the hose so the water just trickles out of the nozzle. Set the hose near the dripline of the plant (at the edge of the branches) and let the hose run until the water begins to puddle. This may take as long as one or two hours. You may wish to move the hose around the perimeter of the plant to distribute water evenly. Water is particularly important for exposed evergreens which transpire from their leaves all winter.

Do not fertilize woody plants now. The soft growth stimulated by fertilizing will not harden off sufficiently before winter and may be injured.

Avoid excessive pruning now. Again the soft growth which results doesn't harden off well. Plants may be fertilized or pruned safely in the late fall after they are dormant.

Begin to collect mulching materials now. Later you can apply the mulch to tender plants so they are protected in case there is insufficient snow cover.

Hybrid tea roses are not completely hardy here, mostly because of the changeable weather. To prepare roses for the winter avoid fertilization in the late summer. After the leaves drop, cut back the canes so the winds don't whip them around. Dust the soil and plant with Phaltan (folpet) and hill the soil about a foot up the canes. When the soil freezes hard, mulch with straw, leaf mold or like material. Hold this in place with wire or rose canes. Remember that the system should be designed, not to keep the plants warm, but to keep them frozen.

By using a little foresight preparation you may be able to prevent plant damage or loss next winter.

**James A. Fizzell, Sr. Extension Adviser
Horticulture**

"WILL FIT" PARTS A THREAT

The Golf Course Superintendents as a whole are getting better educated and more sophisticated. Their responsibilities dictate a daily up-grading to stay abreast of an ever changing and challenging profession. One of the many responsibilities is the preparation of a maintenance budget and then maintain the golf course within the approved budget. Herein presents a serious problem which the "will fit", "like original", "compared to original equipment", or "copy" can affect the superintendent's continued progress.

For some, it is hard to distinguish between a quick sale at a lower price and the long-range good of the industry. Some may offer a few items that are priced below the brands of reputable manufacturers with local stocking distributors. Their company did not share the cost of product development and testing and can conceivably offer a "copy" or "will fit" at a slightly lower price.

A golf course superintendent and GCSAA past president stated, "As superintendents, we are charged with the responsibility of spending our club's monies wisely in the maintenance of their golfing facilities. Much of our work and the results produced by it would not be possible without the invaluable help we receive from reputable manufacturers and their salesmen."

It is the superintendent's responsibility to act wisely in carefully selecting companies that will help rather than hinder progress. The purchase of parts and supplies from the local stocking distributor of the original manufacturer will ensure you of continued products and with parts supply as required for you to do your job.

The "will fit" parts offer no product training or maintenance helps. He offers a mail order form without local distributor inventory and delivery. Do a few low parts prices mean that much compared to the threat it may create? The golf course superintendent can ill afford to waste the progress of the past or slow developments of the future. Consider the total difference on your parts or equipment purchase and only purchase genuine original manufacturers' products.

**Credit - Patch of Green
J. Wayne Goodwin, V.P.
Lawn & Turf, Inc.**

IN YOUR GARDEN DIVIDE IRIS, DAY LILIES, SPRING BULBS NOW

August is the month to divide perennials such as day lilies, iris, and the spring flowering bulbs, like tulips, daffodils and crocuses. These plants tend to become overgrown after a number of years and flowering is reduced, says Donna Peterson Detrick, Summer Horticulturist University of Illinois Extension Service.

Carefully dig the plant clumps from the ground. Shake off as much soil as possible. Gently, scrub off the remaining soil so that the root structure may be examined. Spread the bulbs out to dry. Be sure to label them so you know what is what.

With a sharp knife, cut out all injured or diseased parts from the iris and day lily roots (rhizomes) and discard them.

Divide the rhizomes into clumps, having a large piece of rhizome and at least two fans of leaves. Large divisions will flower next year. Small divisions may take an extra year.

Sort the dried bulbs by size, discarding the diseased bulbs. The largest bulbs will flower next spring. You may wish to plant the smaller ones in a nurse bed to develop for a year or two.

Since these perennials will occupy the same spot in the garden for several years, work the soil carefully, adding bone meal and organic matter to improve fertility and drainage.

Dust the rhizomes and bulbs with a good fungicide before planting. The rhizome should be spaced 12 to 18 inches apart and planted one to two inches deep in the prepared soil. Water them in thoroughly with a trickle hose.

Plant the bulbs at the correct depth (this varies from type to type) in groups for immediate effect next spring. If the soil has been worked up well, bulbs can be planted by hand, or use a bulb planter.

If you are planning to start a new flower garden, plants, divisions, and bulbs are available in garden centers now.

Get started now before the fall rush begins. You'll be glad next year that you did.

**James A. Fizzell, Sr. Extension Adviser
Horticulture**