

New Planting Care Instructions



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Development

New plantings are designed to be somewhat sparse so that there is room for the future growth that brings your plantings to their fulfillment. Over the next 1 - 2 years you will see your planting blossom and mature into an even more beautiful setting for your home. We truly believe that nothing enhances your home and its resale value quite like landscaping. We sincerely hope that you will enjoy your landscape as much as we have designing and creating it. Care, of course, is very important during this phase, which is why we have taken the time to write and furnish this information to you.

Improper watering is the single most important cause of plant death. This is because your new plantings have lost much of their original root system and thus are vulnerable to any fluctuation or shortage of soil moisture.

Proper watering isn't difficult; **the most critical thing is regularity**. It must be done on a regular basis without gaps until the plant has re-grown its root system and can survive some water shortages. This re-growth normally takes about a year or more depending on the size of the specimen. Remember that other factors can affect your watering schedule.

Note ... heavy clay soil may need less frequent watering, while sandy soil may need it more.
Note ... if it is very dry and hot outside, your plants will need more water than if it is damp and cold.

As a rule of thumb, the deeper the roots the more water necessary to "fill up" the soil to their level. Thus groundcovers should be watered **daily** at first and then **2 - 3 times weekly**; small evergreens and shrubs should be watered **2 - 3 times weekly** at first and then **once weekly**. Large trees should be watered **twice weekly** but soaked well by trickling the hose at their base for 1 - 2 hours. **This will vary with your type of soil**. Please ask for specific recommendations for your soil type. Sprinklers work well for grass and groundcovers, but use a hose with a breaker nozzle for all larger plants and soak them deeply. Be sure to check your plantings between watering to make sure they are not waterlogged or too dry and adjust your watering schedule accordingly.

Weeding

Your planting beds have weed preventers and mulches to help retard weed growth. However, it will not totally eliminate them. We suggest you pull the weeds that come up occasionally and apply "Preen" by following label directions to help prevent new weeds next year. **Do not** allow weeds to take over any of your groundcover areas because they are extremely difficult to eradicate later.

Feeding

Most plantings do not require fertilizer until fall. Your plantings were fed at the time of placement. Groundcovers are the exception to this Fertilize groundcover weekly from April - September with Miracle-Gro according to label directions. Your groundcover will fill in much quicker this way.

Insects & Diseases

If you find any signs of insect or what might be a plant disease, bag a sample branch or leaf and give us a call. Do not ignore the problem or try to treat it yourself without finding more information on the problem.

Pruning

Little pruning will be needed the first couple years. We try to use plant material that is naturally dwarf or compact and requires minimal pruning. However, some varieties may need a little shaping. The best time for pruning is after the plant is finished blooming. Shearing will cause premature aging of all plants and re-landscaping before it would otherwise be necessary. See Clark's pruning instruction sheet for further information.

Rhododendrons

Some plants have a few peculiarities. Rhododendrons, for instance, require you to remove the seed heads after blooming, and at the same time, fertilize them with rhododendron and azalea food. In late fall, use wilt-proof on your Rhododendrons and Azaleas to protect the leaves from the cold winter winds and temperatures.

Adding Color

We strongly recommend you plant varieties of bulbs, such as tulips, daffodils, and crocus for delightful spring color. They do well in groundcover beds and mulch beds, and really compliment your other plantings. For summer and fall color, you can incorporate flowering annuals by using decorative pots and planters that can be changed for the season.

Replacements

If you lose a plant during the one-year warranty period, call Clark's with the name and size (get this information from your plan and materials list). It will be replaced as soon as possible.

Bark Mulch

Bark mulch is a natural organic material that will slowly break down, adding nutrients to the soil. We recommend you recap your beds every other year with a **thin layer** to retain the weed preventing and water insulating benefits of the bark. If desired, we can do this for you at a reasonable cost on a regular basis. As the years go by, a thick base develops and slows the breaking down process of the new bark.

Other Questions

If something else comes up, call Clark's at 784-5525. We have Michigan Certified Nurserymen who can supply the answers you need to keep your landscape beautiful.