

NEW LANDSCAPE CARE GUIDE

Now that you have taken the step of having a new landscape installed, you probably have some questions regarding the proper care of newly planted trees, shrubs perennials and ornamental grasses. It is important to remember that we have installed living material into your landscape and it must be treated properly. We have compiled some information for you on needed care to get your plants off to a healthy start.

TREES

The trees planted for you by CM's Custom Lawn & Landscape are guaranteed for one year from the planting date provided they receive proper care and watering. We select trees from hardy and healthy stock and plant them in the proper manner. Your help is needed to ensure that the trees are cared for during that first year. Watering trees is the most important aspect of survival. Eastern Nebraska has varying soil types but for the most part, heavy clay is dominant. Clay soils will retain water for longer periods of time compared to a sandy soil, so take this into account when you establish your watering schedule. Trees are initially watered in at the time of planting unless a water source is not available. Newly planted trees require water approximately twice per week. This will vary depending on the time of year that the tree is planted. To water, simply turn on the watering hose to a slight trickle and lay it at the base of the tree or at the edge of the mulch berm for approximately 20 to 30 minutes. Repeat this step on the other side of the tree. The goal is to let the water seep down through the root ball and not run off into neighboring turf. A rule of thumb to remember is the 1-2-1 rule: once per week in spring, twice per week in the summer and once per week in the fall.

Staking is done at installation. This is done to "guide" the tree in a straight growth pattern. If a stake or wire does come loose, it should be reattached or tightened to allow straight growth. Multi-trunk trees (i.e. River Birch, Redbud etc...) are not usually staked.

SHRUBS

Shrubs are guaranteed for one year from the planting date, provided they receive proper amounts of water. The water hose should be turned to a light stream and held above the plant for approximately one minute. Moving the hose in a circular pattern around the shrub is recommended for even distribution of water. Shrubs are watered in by CM's employees at the time of planting but will certainly need additional water thereafter. A thorough soaking twice per week is a good starting point. If the weather is hot and windy water will evaporate from the ground and transpire through leaf pores at a higher rate, making additional water necessary. It is not uncommon for a shrub to drop its existing leaf set after being planted into a new landscape (transplant shock.) This is the plant's way of shifting priorities from the leaf / flower system to re-establishing the root zone. Trees and shrubs have two or three sets of leaves for this reason. If the plant goes through a stress period, leaves will drop and the plant will go into survival mode and force its energy into the root zone. Once this period is over and the plant regains strength, new leaf shoots will appear. This transformation does not always occur; however, if your newly planted shrubs look sickly for the first 30 days, do not be too alarmed.

PERENNIALS

Perennials planted by CM's Custom Lawn & Landscape carry a survival guarantee for 30 days from planting provided they receive proper watering. Plants are watered in by CM's employees at the time of planting but will need further attention. With the hose on a light stream, place the water directly on the center of the plant and hold there for approx. 20 seconds. Water every third day in normal (seasonal) weather. Hot summer months may require watering every other day until the plants have become established after one growing season. The second growing season should require far less watering for you. During dry spells, one good soaking per week should be sufficient. If you have a drip or soak irrigation system installed in you beds, set the clock station accordingly. If you have any questions regarding your current system or would like to discuss the benefits of installing a drip irrigation system in your landscape, please contact us.

Most perennials can be pruned back after the first initial spring bloom. This will promote new stem, leaf and flower bud growth. Removing any spent flower blooms and dead or struggling material from the plant is recommended. Do not leave any removed portions of the plant on the ground for they may be diseased and may affect any surrounding plants.

ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

Ornamental grasses planted by CM's Custom Lawn & Landscape carry a survival guarantee for 30 days from planting provided they receive proper watering. The watering schedule should be the same as it is for perennials, one good soaking every third day in normal conditions or every other day in hot dry spells. Reduce frequency after the first 30 to 45 days. Once established (one growing season), ornamental grasses need little attention and can usually thrive with minimal water.

CM'S NOTES AND HELPFUL HINTS:

- CM's warranty on perennials and ornamental grasses is 30 days from planting
- Many plants do not initially survive due to OVER watering.
- Do not rely on rainfall or a sprinkler system to do the work for you. Newly planted material needs water to reach deep into the root zone.
- Newly installed landscapes average about 85% survival rate in the first year. Expect some mortality.
- Trees, shrubs and perennials can be very resilient. Be patient and their health and vigor may surprise you.
- After the initial 30 to 45 days, weaning perennials and ornamental grasses off of continual water is a good idea. A little tough love can be good for the plant by making it work for water and nutrients. They do this by spreading the root zone which strengthens the plant.

- Most ornamental grasses thrive in hot and dry conditions. Once they are established (one growing season), little watering is needed.
- Most ornamental grasses will maintain their growth shape throughout the winter months. To add interest to the landscape, leave the grasses up and cut back in the spring.
- To cut back ornamental grasses, simply shear the plant and leave approx. 12" of base. New growth will come from the base of the plant.
- A general purpose 10-10-10 fertilizer application will assist spring growth.
- Too much or continued fertilizer applications may result in more leaf and stem growth and less flowering activity.
- Tree stakes should be left in place for one year after planting.
- There is no such thing as a "maintenance-free" landscape
- Please consult your CM's salesperson or on-site crew leader with any other plant-care questions