



# Grass Roots

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## Turf Talk 2015.03

One of the items we typically write about this time of year is irrigation- making sure the system is working correctly and watering appropriately. To date, irrigation has not been a problem. Mowing, on the other hand, is a challenge. As demanding as it is right now, mowing correctly is critical to the long-term health of the lawn. Customers tell me they are mowing more frequently than typical. If that is what is required, that is what you should do. Some landscape plants have been slowed by this spring's cooler weather. As it warms up, they will do better.

We continue to push forward with the second pre-emergent application, slowed somewhat by the rain. We hope that none of the delays have caused you any inconvenience. Our plan is to begin the grub control application in mid-June, as scheduled.

We do anticipate that summer will arrive sooner or later; and, as it does, we have our usual cautions. If you are going to be on vacation for any length of time, make provisions for the care of your lawn. Fertilizer applications that are not watered in lose their effectiveness over time. Lawns that are not maintained on a regular mowing cycle suffer shock if, when mowing resumes, too much of the plant is removed at one time. If the weather happens to be warm at the time, the plant can be further weakened, making it more vulnerable to summer stresses like disease, insects, and foot-traffic. If supplemental irrigation becomes a necessity at some point this summer, water to the depth of the root zone as infrequently as possible.

If there is anything else we can do to help you, [please contact us.](#)



## Walk Right In

Have you ever thought your outdoor décor was missing some accent piece, something that really stood out?

Consider adding planters. Planters come in a variety of shapes, sizes, colors and materials. They are also fantastic additions to a business storefront. Your favorite annuals can be planted at the appropriate time and kept all season long or your planters can be changed out seasonally with your favorite annuals or decorations. Yes, we said decorations. Planters need not be limited to only plants. Glass flowers, tall lawn ornaments and even decorations for specific holidays and seasons can be added to planters. CM's can assemble your planters in the current season and come back each season to change the contents.

Making sure annuals get the water they need is vital. CM's can add a zone to your existing irrigation system for your planters. The sprinkler line will run through the planter and will be completely concealed in your beautiful planter. The irrigation for the planter can be set to its own schedule so your annuals will get the amount of water they need, when they need it.

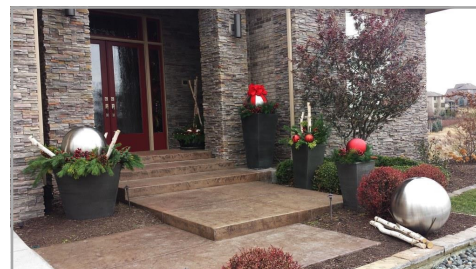


These planters are great examples of the "Thriller, spiller, filler" technique. Thriller plants stand up tall above the planter. Spiller plants spill over the side of the planter. Filler plants, fill in the gaps between the thriller and spiller plants. Together, these plants create depth to the planter that is stunning.



Left: This planter has incorporated various glass decorations into the planter to add visual interest.

Right: This entryway showcases the variety of planter options, as well as beautiful holiday décor for the winter.



## Reminders

1. Plant spring annuals
2. Prune flowering shrubs
3. Inspect irrigation systems

[Contact CM's for Your New Planters!](#)



Ask The Arborist

## Are insects ever helpful? They just *bug* me!

Spring is here! We are thrilled with how healthy the trees and

landscape plants have been doing coming out of the winter season (with the exception of a few species sensitive to cold in our area). Have you seen the size of the Linden tree leaves? Very impressive. Even in perfect growing conditions, we will still come across some kind of bug or disease that wants to pester our beloved plants. When we see bugs and diseases our first instinct is to quickly eliminate them by spraying. One of the most common issues we notice with the use of chemicals is that the first step of pest management is skipped—proper identification. This leads to the accidental death of many beneficial insects that we want to see in our trees and landscape plants. A beneficial insect can be anything from a natural predator of other pests to a pollinator who helps maintain and balance the natural ecosystem of your yard. Below is a small list of our little friends.

**Bees** Honey bees, bumble bees, ground bees, you name it. Even if they buzz in your face and have scary stingers they play a crucial role as chief pollinators. You can find these busy bodies on just about anything that is blooming. Linden tree nectar is a particular favorite for bees in Nebraska during early spring. It is best to postpone spraying pesticide until after trees have bloomed. Also avoid using spray insecticides that contain neonicotinoides as these are lethal to bees.



Honeybee



Ladybug, adult

**Lady Bug** Who can hate a ladybug? These charming little critters feast on pesky aphids from the time they are a nymph until they become adults. Nymphs are long and black with orange markings looking almost nothing like an adult lady beetle. You can purchase containers of lady bugs at some garden centers, or you can encourage them to take refuge in your yard by growing plants they love like angelica, marigold, raspberry and even some herbs such as fennel and dill.



Ladybug, nymph

**Soldier Beetle** These guys are truly a soldier of the landscape. Not only do they act as a pollinator by feeding on nectar and pollen, but they also are a natural predator to damaging insects. Larvae feed on a variety of insects, including the eggs of grasshoppers and caterpillars while the adult beetles prefer soft bodied bugs like aphids. Soldier beetles are black and orange, varying in markings and closely resemble their relative, the lightning bug. Their favorite plant is the goldenrod. Consider planting this native flower if you would like to recruit more soldiers.



Soldier beetle, adult

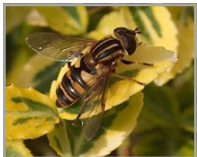


Lacewing, adult

**Green Lacewings** The menu of green lacewing larvae is extensive, making it one of the top beneficial predators in North America. They prefer the immature stages and eggs of many insects including spider mites, thrips, whitefly, pest caterpillars, mealy bugs, and aphids. Once the lacewing larvae build a cocoon and emerge into adults they also become pollinators. Lacewings can easily be identified by their lime green to yellow slender body and long translucent wings with green veins. Like the lady bug, you can also find them for sale at a garden center or online.



Lacewing, nymph



Syrphid Fly

**Syrphid Flies** Also called hover flies, syrphid flies are easily mistaken for a bee because of their striped black and yellow bodies. You can find them pollinating your garden or hanging out near any citrus or tropical trees you might put out during the summer. The adolescent stage of the syrphid flies feeds mainly on soft bodied prey such as leafhoppers, thrips, aphids, and small caterpillars.

[Contact an arborist for an evaluation!](#)



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