

Fall Yard Maintenance

Get spring ready!

Capital Regional District | October 2020

The leaves on the trees may be changing colour, but it is not yet time to forget about summer! Fall is a great time to prepare your yard for spring. Use the fall maintenance tips below for a healthy yard.

Water Wise Lawn

The biggest drain on our water resources during the summer months is outdoor use, primarily lawn and garden watering. Luckily, healthy lawns need less water. Here's what you can do this fall for a thriving water-wise lawn:

1. **De-thatch** to remove dead matted grass.
2. **Aerate** to allow water, oxygen, nutrients and organic matter to seep into the soil and reach grass roots. Puncture the lawn with a gardening fork or powered aerator, while being mindful of underground irrigation system lines, if relevant.
3. **Top-dress and overseed** with a thin layer of compost to help soil hold water and nutrients.
4. **Apply a half-treatment of lime** if your soil is acidic. A neutral pH helps protect grass from heat and drought.
5. **Water wisely** by adjusting the amount you water to account for rainfall. Remember: your lawn only needs one inch (2.5 cm) of water per week (including rainfall) to stay green.

Install Native Plants

Plant native species in the fall so roots are established by the following spring. Adapted to the local climate, native plants are usually happy with only rainfall, even in the dry summer, once mature. They also attract local birds, pollinators and beneficial insects, which can act as natural pest control.

Scan for Invasive Species

Scan your yard for invasive species. Remember to properly dispose of invasive species and never put them into your compost. For a list of invasive species in our region, visit the CRD website.

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Irrigation Winterization

Winterizing your irrigation system will help save time and money, while also reducing water waste. Flush your irrigation system to ensure that there is no water left to cause cracks in pipes and sprinklers. For more detailed instructions, visit the CRD website. If you prefer to work with a professional, hire a qualified contractor to winterize your complete system.

Fertilize Wisely

Fertilizers can pollute soil and groundwater, and can remain in the environment for long periods of time after application. The chemicals in and fertilizers pollute our streams, creeks and waterways if they enter our stormwater system. Instead, fertilize with organic compost that will not harm the environment. Properly dispose of fertilizers after use.

Sweep Clean

Clean sidewalks, driveways and patios with a brush or broom, rather than power washing. Power washing can dislodge pollutants (like paint chips or oily sediments) and cause chemical residues and soaps to flow into the stormwater system, harming aquatic life and habitat. If you must power wash, sweep the surface before washing and use absorbents on oil spots.