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Things to Think About Now

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he growing season is winding down and another summer has passed. Our trees and landscape plants are going dormant – dormant but very much alive. Fall is the time to think about protecting your plants for the winter and preparing for next year.

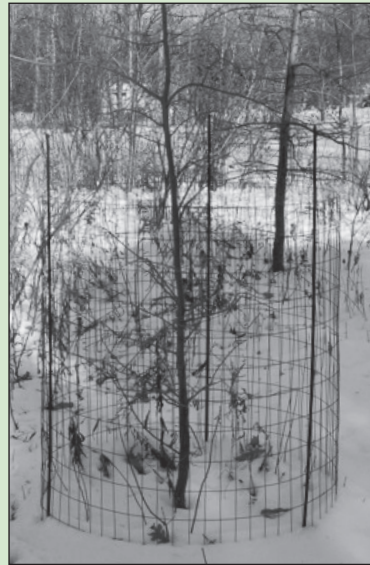
- Protect young trees and shrubs from deer feeding and antler rubbing. Install wire mesh fencing supported by stakes to create a physical barrier. The fence needs to be 4' tall at a minimum.
- This year's lush growth is supporting a healthy vole population. Voles can completely girdle the stems of younger/smaller trees and shrubs. Begin setting mouse-traps to reduce the population. Or set out poison baits. Put bait in some type of small container so that the baits are protected from the weather and only inviting to a vole. Set under shrubs and along your foundation.
- Hardware cloth (wire mesh) can be placed around the trunks and stems of woody plants to protect them from rodent damage as well.
- It is not too late to mulch. If your mulch is thin at the base of plants, top dress before winter. Mulch will insulate the roots, moderating temperature extremes; maintain soil moisture and control weeds next season. In the long-term, as mulches biodegrade, they add organic matter to the soil, building better soils. Proper mulching is one of the best things we can do for our trees. Keep mulch about two inches away from the trunks and stems, mulch the soil and root system – not the trunk!
- Fall is an excellent time to fertilize. Tree roots are active, growing and absorbing even after leaf drop.

Stressed trees (most are, to some degree) will benefit from slow-release fertilization.

- Late season anti-desiccant sprays are beneficial to reduce moisture loss on evergreens during the winter. Newly planted evergreens are especially susceptible to desiccation. Broadleaf evergreens such as boxwood and holly are good candidates, as well as plants in sunny/windy exposures and those subject to de-icing salts.
- Thinking about planting a tree? Most deciduous trees can be planted, even into the late fall. You will have a

better looking tree next year if you plant it this fall, than if you wait until spring to plant.

Wachtel's, experienced staff is eager to help. We can advise you on the details or we can make it happen for you. Give us a call. The season is upon us.



Wire mesh cage