



# Winterizing Lawns and Gardens

Colorado winters can be rough on plants. Bringing plants through our dry, alternating freeze/thaw conditions can be a challenge. Here are a few tips that should help.

## Watering

- ◆ During the fall when temperatures are cooler, plants do not need to be watered as often. Check the soil around the roots of your plants by digging a small hole down about 6-8" deep with a trowel about a foot beyond the drip line for recently planted trees and shrubs. The soil should feel evenly moist but not soggy.
- ◆ After the leaves have turned or dropped and the top growth of the plant has stopped, water plants thoroughly. It is important to send your plants into winter well-watered.
- ◆ During dry periods throughout the winter----trees, shrubs and perennials should be watered every 4-6 weeks when there is no snow on the ground. Water when the air temperature is above freezing and the top of the soil is not frozen. Water early in the day so the moisture can soak in before evening and to avoid possible freezing during the night.
- ◆ Avoid watering during times when temperatures are below freezing because ice formation can damage plants.

## Pruning

- ◆ Avoid early fall pruning. Pruning plants that still have green leaves stimulates new growth which will not be hardened off during the winter. It also removes valuable stored energy needed for winter survival.
- ◆ Fall pruning of spring-flowering plants removes buds that will become the next year's flowers. (Prune spring-flowering shrubs immediately after flowering.)
- ◆ Wrap young deciduous trees with tree wrap to prevent winter sun scald injury. Wrap at Thanksgiving. Unwrap at Easter. Start at the bottom of the tree and wrap up to the second major lateral branches, overlapping 1/3 with each turn. Secure wrap at the top and bottom with a plastic tie, masking tape, etc. Avoid stapling into the tree. Young trees will need to be wrapped each winter until they have formed true bark.

## Lawns

- ◆ Apply winterizer fertilizer in September and again in late October or November (as long as the grass is still green). Shoot growth has slowed and nutrients will be utilized by roots for added growth and early spring green-up. ***Fall is the most important time to fertilize.***