

Hughes News

June 2020 Newsletter



Dear Neighbors,

Throughout this month we'll prune azaleas, rhododendrons, photinia, needled evergreens, and other spring flowering shrubs if they are too frisky. Every day we encounter new customers who have allowed their azaleas to get leggy and grow over walkways and above window ledges. You can prune azaleas harshly if they're blocking your way or your light. They'll bounce back bushy – sprinkle three or four coffee mugs of Hollytone through the shrub after you've cut them back to get a good blooming season next year.

Deep prune your big boxwoods: Cut out chunks of foliage as big as your fist every foot or so about the bush. The stems should be cut 12"-18" long down into the shrub. Do this every year and you will get a vigorous interior growth that survives to renew the shrub from the inside out. While you're doing it (and each time you walk past them) swat your boxwoods to shake loose the damp leaves that collect in the crotches and attract boring insects and diseases. Blisters on boxwood leaves indicate leaf miners, a tiny, phosphorescent orange worm that mines out the interior of the leaf to weaken your plant and make it ugly. If you think you might have a problem, give our applications specialist, Dave Gibbins a call (extension 105) and he will gladly drop by to inspect them.

We've begun to revisit properties that we cleaned up and mulched during March, April, and May. On our gardening visits, edges will be rediscovered and beds will be weeded to keep you looking pristine for the next few weeks. Let us know if you want additional perennials or shrubs to be installed. If your property is irrigated or you are careful to water newly planted shrubs and small trees, you can plant in July and August. If you will be away for an extended period during the summer without watering arrangements, delay your planting until the kids go back to school. Besides being the month to prune, June also is the best time to get at weeds. Our tip of the decade is to water your beds heavily the day before you plan to weed; besides being good for your intentional plants it gives the weeds a false sense that you are their friend and they will come out of the ground willingly, thinking (for the whole time you are tugging at them) that you are about to transplant them to your upper beds. If you can get them before they go to seed, it minimizes the effort required a few weeks hence.

Speaking of watering, please oh please water deeply at least every ten days during the latter part of June and all of July and August. We typically raise our mowing height as the temperature rises. An added benefit of high mowing is that weed seeds aren't as likely to germinate in tall grass. Even though tall grass requires much less frequent watering than short grass, attention still should be paid. If the grass starts to develop a slightly bluish hue and does not stand back up readily when walked on, give it a good soaking the next morning. When a 39-ounce coffee can has collected an inch of water in the bottom, move your sprinkler to the next location.

Don't forget to call us for your garden construction needs. We can have you sitting under a new pergola on a new patio before you know it. If your neighbors get too envious, we can install a row of European hornbeams or a fence to block the view!

We hope to see you soon!

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