

Timely Turf Tips

July 2014

Summer heat is here. July can be hot, humid, and buggy, but it is important to keep monitoring your yard and garden for possible issues daily. Spend some time in the cooler mornings or late in the day enjoying the bountiful growth produced by June rain and July heat. Watch for pests like Japanese Beetles and Rose Chafers, which are starting to appear in the area at the start of this month according to Jeff Hahn, Extension Entomologist at the University of Minnesota. Small infestations can be slowed by hand-picking the pests and disposing of them by knocking them into a container of soapy water. Hahn recommends picking Japanese Beetles at night (after 7:00 PM) for the best results. Come see us at the mill if you have larger populations for additional suggestions for control. Another pest, the squash vine borer, is also out now states Hahn, so check out this link, www.extension.umn.edu/garden/insects/find/squash-vine-borers/, for more information if you are growing summer and winter squash or pumpkins. We can provide an insecticide treatment to help stop the larvae from entering the stem and prevent the possible loss of the entire plant.

July garden and lawn tips:

- Side-dress tomatoes and peppers with a complete fertilizer such as 12-6-6 Growers Special (available at the mill-see coupon attached below) when they start to flower and produce fruit.
- Mulch gardens and flower beds to lessen moisture loss and help prevent annual weeds.
- If you have garlic planted, mid-July through the first week of August is the time to harvest. Get more information on harvesting and curing garlic from the U of M Extension at this link: www.extension.umn.edu/garden/fruit-vegetable/growing-garlic-in-minnesota/index.html
- Stop harvesting asparagus and rhubarb now to allow the plants time to store energy for next year's crop.
- Monitor the lower leaves of tomato plants for leaf spot diseases like early blight and septoria. Remove infected foliage and spray plants with a registered protective fungicide if the disease is severe (see coupon below.) Mulching around the plants may help prevent disease organisms from splashing up from the soil. Watering early in the day and keeping the moisture off of the leaves as much as possible can also lessen the occurrence of the disease.
- Cut back early-blooming perennials and begin deadheading annuals for summer-long bloom. Fertilize flowering annuals during first bloom and again before the season ends for the best results.
- Plants grown in containers and hanging baskets need extra care in the hot weather of July. Check moisture levels daily, watering as needed, and consider using a water soluble fertilizer at half strength weekly to provide additional nutrients for the plants.
- Keep the grass 3 to 3 ½ inches tall with regular mowing. Taller grass is more drought-tolerant by providing more shade to the grass crowns and roots.
- Water lawns early in the day if possible, remembering that lawns need an average of 1" of water per week.



Japanese Beetle

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