

The hot and dry summer weeks can severely stress our trees, shrubs and lawns, but homeowners can easily protect.

During the heat of the summer, our plants are under severe stress. High temperatures, gusty winds, hail, rain and lightning can cause damage to our prized plants. Although we have little control over the weather, there are a number of things we can do to minimize the damage and maintain good vigor.

During drought periods, it is imperative that landscape trees are watered on a regular basis if rainfall is not adequate. A good recommendation is to water three times per week during the summer months and twice a week during the spring and early fall if there is no rainfall. The typical lawn sprinklers are not adequate for our larger trees and shrubs

Another area of concern is how we handle fertilizing and watering of our lawns. Most homeowners do have irrigation or sprinkler systems, but struggle with keeping their grass green and vigorous. Keep in mind that our lawns consist of cool season grasses, Kentucky bluegrass, fescues and perennial ryegrass. These grasses grow well in the cool months of spring and fall. But once the hot, dry summer weeks arrive, these grasses start to struggle and often go dormant. What was once a lush, dark green lawn has now turned brown or at least light green. Apply nitrogen in the late spring and early summer months and also in the fall. Summer applications of nitrogen are not recommended. When watering your lawn, it is best to irrigate during the morning hours to insure that the foliage dries off rapidly to minimize disease potential. Watering at night might increase disease potential. Water is critical to quality turf.

High winds and lightning can cause severe damage to landscape plants. This can range from minor limb breakage to major tree damage. Where limbs are broken, it is important to cut off as cleanly as possible to prevent further damage to the tree.

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