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## **Monthly Lawn Care Tips**

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### **DECEMBER: *Beat the Cold***

Outwit winter chill by preparing for cold snaps. A few simple steps can mean the difference between a plant that dies or survives.

If a frost warning is issued, water plants before temperatures drop. Plants that are well-watered survive frost better. When frost comes without warning, watering afterwards helps plants survive. Irrigate after plants start to thaw. When you're covering plants for the night, ensure your protective coverings touch the ground. Frost protection covers work by trapping radiant heat in soil. As soil releases its heat, the cover holds the heat around the plant. Use fabric covers, such as plant insulating blankets, burlap, or bed sheets.



It's easy and quick to build a shelter around tender plants: Anchor stakes in soil and attach a cover to stakes. Fill around the plants with leaves or straw. Not all plants can withstand the same low temperatures. If temperatures are predicted to drop below 25 degrees F, protect pittosporum, fragrant daphne, and waxleaf privet. If temperatures are predicted to drop below 15 degrees F, protect broadleaf evergreens such as rhododendron, camellia, holly, etc.

### **Test Garden Tip**

When a lawn is frozen or grass blades are frost-covered, keep off. Walking on lawns in this condition can actually damage turf crowns.

### **Pacific Northwest Garden Tasks**

- Go on rodent patrol: It's prime season for pesky varmints to chew bark off trees and shrubs. Eliminate hiding places for rodents by removing weeds around woody landscape plants. Also, never pile mulch directly against a tree trunk or shrub base.
- Keep compost going: Heavy winter rains can quickly drench compost, eliminating oxygen from the pile and making it stink. Slip a cover over your compost during winter's rainy season. Blanketing the top is fine.

- Monitor water flow: During heavy rain falls, observe water runoff patterns in your landscape. Address these issues next year with ditches or French drains. Or spend winter learning about rain gardens and bioswales -- and add one of these gardens to your yard.
- Store tender roots: Before the month ends, examine roots, tubers, and corms you dug during fall. Compost any that are soft or moldy. On dahlias, cut out bad spots and dust the wound with sulfur. Remove these tubers from the others and store separately.
- Stop hitchhikers: Reduce home insect invasions from firewood by bringing in only enough wood to burn for a day. Knock logs together or against the ground before bringing indoors to dislodge insects.

### **In Conclusion**

Natural Concept Landscape Co., Inc. is ready to assist you with all of your lawn care needs, offering preventative maintenance as well as on-going lawn and garden maintenance options. We are in the business of making your life a little greener, a little easier, and a lot more enjoyable. Should you notice any problem areas in your lawn, please give us a call to schedule a consultation. Your lawn will be happy you called us... And you will be too! *Enjoy the beauty of Winter!*