



LANDSCAPE CAREBOOK

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Contents

Introduction	01
New Lawns	02
Plants, Trees, & Shrubs	05
Irrigation System	07
Mulches	12
Landscape Lighting	13
Water Features	14
Monthly Checklist	18



Introduction

All of us at J&S Landscape sincerely appreciate that you've chosen us to help with your new landscape installation. We understand that landscape is an investment and with proper care and maintenance, it will mature and become more beautiful with each passing year.

We have prepared this care book for you to reference, as it contains many industry practices that will help you to know how to best care for your new landscape. We have also included a monthly checklist which outlines the best time of the season for various maintenance and irrigation tasks. Please feel free to reach out to us if you should have any questions.

We hope that you find the information provided in this booklet useful. Feel free to send us photos of your landscape throughout the years. We love to see how things progress!

Thank you for your business and enjoy your new landscape!

Let's begin...



New Lawns...

- Water new sod twice a day for the first two weeks. It's important that it is kept damp.
- Keep foot traffic to a minimum as it takes time for the seams and root systems to become established.

First Mowing:

- The first mowing can occur 2-3 weeks after installation or when sod reaches a height of 3.5"-4" tall.
- Adjust the mower blade height to 3" and be certain the blades are sharp!
- Before the first mow, let the sod dry out for 24 hours.
- Regular mowing can be done every 4-7 days in the growing season. Cut 1/3 of the grass blade or less in order to maintain healthy turf.



Weeding & Fertilizing:

- After the first mowing, feed your new sod with a high-nitrogen fertilizer.
- Plants and turf are healthiest when the soil ecology is thriving. Adding a liquid application of compost tea, humic acid, and mycorrhizae twice per season will help activate the soil.
- Chemical herbicides and fertilizers can offer quick results, however, they leave behind salt deposits and toxins in the soil. Over time, this can effect the health of the turf and plants as well as the health of pets/humans.
- In the growing season, it is recommended to apply fertility to your turf every 6-8 weeks. A natural, slow-release granular fertilizer is recommended.
- Should weeds arise, we recommend to manually pull them or use a product like Fiesta or Pulverize. These are pet/human safe herbicides for the turf. They overdose the plant with iron and release it back into the soil without killing the grass or leaving toxic chemicals for pets to pick up.



General Notes...

- In order to promote deeper root growth, water less often for longer periods of time. This will help the roots reach down further to help uptake nutrients.
- Winter watering is important, especially in the first year, while the root system is becoming established. Watering once per month in the first season will help to ensure the success of the turf.
- It is also recommended to aerate the lawn once or twice per season after the first year. This will help to bring more air flow, water, and nutrients into our compacted Colorado soils.



New Seeded Lawns:

- Keep the seed bed evenly moist at all times. Germination will occur within the first 10-21 days.
- Overwatering can cause erosion, while not enough water can cause new seedlings to dry out.
- Fertilizers and herbicides are not needed at this time, as they can burn young roots.
- The first mowing can occur about 4-6 weeks after seeding takes place.
- After 3 months of growth, it is okay to apply a light amount of fertility to the lawn. Keep in mind that too much fertilizer can burn the lawn.



General Notes...

- It can take up to a full year for your lawn to fill in.
- Alternating mowing directions and allowing the grass clippings to mulch into the ground will help achieve more dense grass and thicker root systems.
- Dry land seeding is generally not irrigated. It is dependent upon Mother Nature for adequate moisture to germinate. The seed underground will remain dormant until the conditions are right to sprout. You will need to manually water for faster germination or wait for a rainy spell!



Plants, Trees, & Shrubs

Pruning/Trimming:

- A newly installed landscape will not need pruning for the first couple of years while it gets established.

- In general, prune trees and shrubs no more than 15-25% at a time. This will help to keep them from going into shock. It is also good practice to wait until they are done flowering and fruiting.



- Winter is a great time for renewal pruning! Renewal pruning practices include: removing crossing or downward-facing limbs, water shoots and suckers from the base, and lightly opening up the middle for airflow and light.

- Perennial cutback is a good practice once the herbaceous perennials have died back in the Fall and have stored their energy into their roots for the season.

- You can leave seed heads and grasses for Winter interest or you can cut back the perennials to 6-8" above ground. Leave a bit of leaf debris around the base for nesting butterflies and beneficial insects for the Springtime.



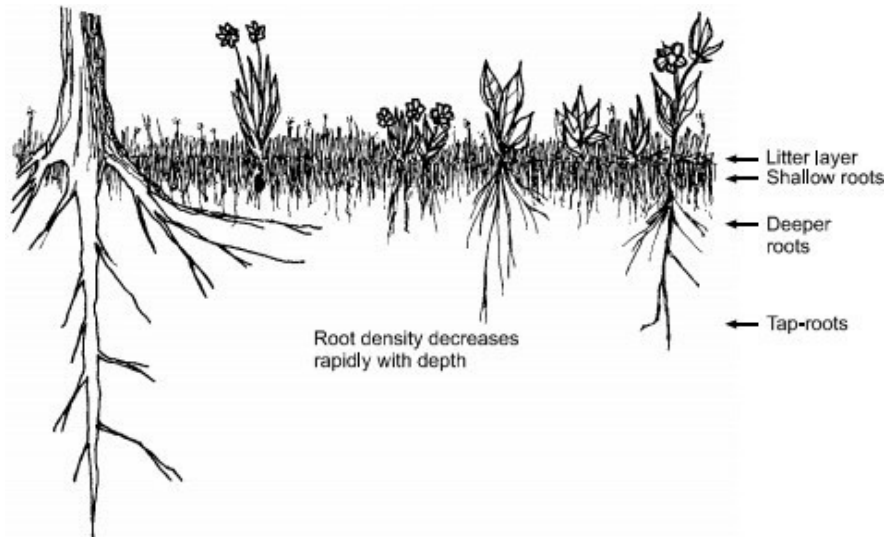
Watering:

- Much like turf, deep watering trees, shrubs, and plants less often will achieve better results than light watering more frequently.

- Check soil moisture often to determine the water needs of the plant. The soil should be moist, not wet.

- Overwatering is a major cause of problems with plants. They like to dry out a little in between watering.

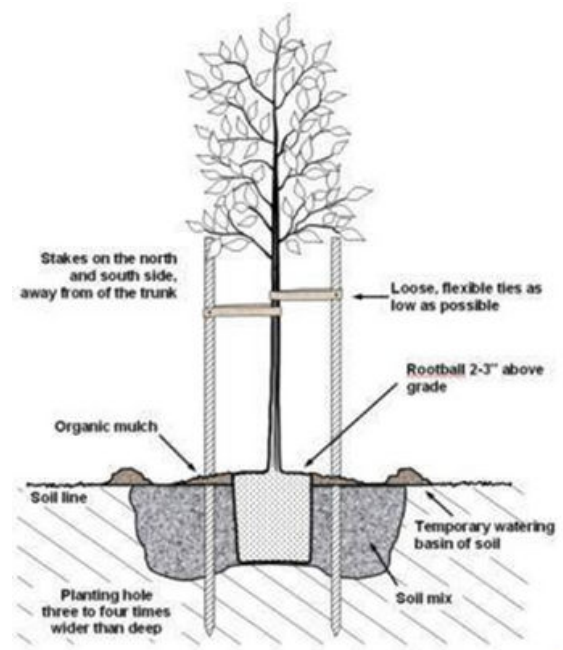




- It is recommended to water in the early morning as it gives plants time to drink throughout the day and decreases wasteful evaporation.
- Watering in the evening is not recommended as it can cause a host of root and fungus problems in trees and shrubs (especially in fruit trees).
- New plants do not have extended root systems, so the original area of the pot or ball must remain moist. This is also important when planting new plants amongst older plantings.

Wrapping & Staking Trees:

- All new trees should be staked for the first couple of seasons. In Colorado, we have over 100-mph winds that can damage new trees. Keeping the ties loose and flexible will allow the tree roots to strengthen.
- Wrapping the lower tree trunks with a secure tree wrap for the first few seasons is also recommended to protect the young cambium of the tree.





General Notes...

J&S Landscape sources its plant material from local Colorado growers. The plants, trees, and shrubs are grown acclimated to our clay soils. Plants are very resilient, but do need attention and care... especially when they are young!

Please feel free to contact us with plant care questions and/or contact the Boulder County Extension Service at: 303-776-4865.

Drought information is available at: www.colostate.edu, www.watersaver.org, and www.planttalk.org.



Automated Irrigation System:

Your new irrigation system should provide you with years of trouble-free operation. We've provided an outline of simple maintenance procedures below.

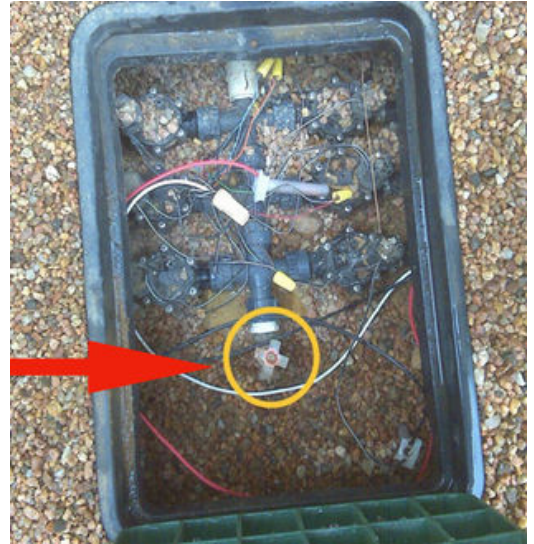
When followed, these procedures will help your irrigation system to function properly.



Spring Irrigation Boot-Up:

(MID-MAY IN COLORADO)

1. Locate your green valve boxes; each has a drain.
2. Make sure that each of these drains are closed.

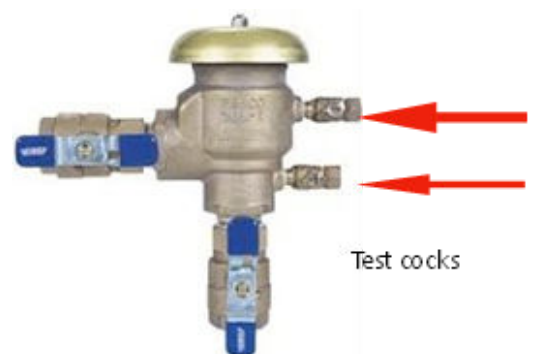


3. Locate your PVB (Pressure Vacuum Breaker) or backflow device.

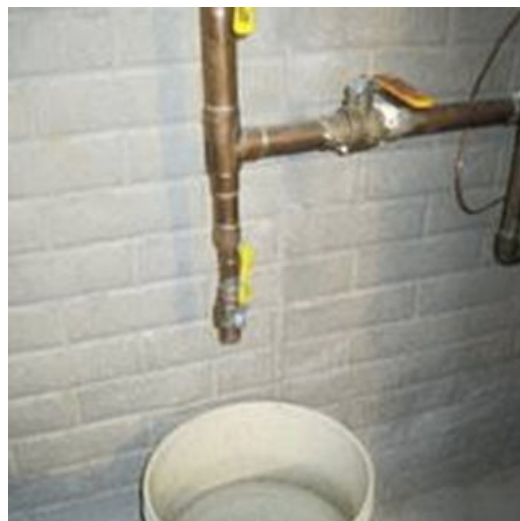


4. Close the PVB test cocks (there can be 2-4 of these on some PVB's):

(|) closed position
(-) open position



-
5. Close the drain located in the pit (or in the basement), where the water line was tapped. It may look similar to this:



6. Close the drain next to the master valve (typically in 12" round valve box).



7. **Open the Irrigation supply valve very slowly.** (This valve is also located in the pit where the tap was made or in the basement).



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8. **Open ball valves** (typically green-handled valves, turned 45 degrees in Winter) on the vacuum breaker. This energizes the main line.

***These valves should also be opened very slowly.**



9. **Programming your controller:**

a. Set the time, day, and date.

b. Program how long each station will run. During peak watering season (June through September), water 3-4 days per week, alternating watering days. Begin at 6:00am.

*Pop-up Zones: 6-15 mins +/- per cycle

*Rotor Zones: 7-15 mins +/- per cycle

*Drip Zones: 30-45 mins per cycle



These calculations are averages and will vary depending on time of season, plant material type, location relative to the sun, and the conditions of the wind, slope, and the soil.



10. Running through your system:

- a. Run through each zone and check for broken heads or leaks.
- b. Adjust sprinkler heads for proper coverage and clean dirty nozzles. Clean or replace any filter screens as well.

Broken sprinkler heads and leaks can add up to high water bills, so be sure to fix them or give us a call as soon as you see a problem!

Seasonal Irrigation System Maintenance:

- Inspect the sprinkler heads periodically and make sure that they have proper spray coverage and are watering efficiently.
- Inspect the drip lines to make sure they are functioning properly. Check for broken or loose emitters.
- Adjust the irrigation controller as needed, considering warm and cool season needs.
- Winterize the irrigation system every season.
- Wrap the back flow preventer (PVB) with insulation from September through mid-May to protect from freezing temperatures.

Winterization/Blow-Out Procedure:

1. Close the main supply (turn off water supply).
2. Connect air compressor to the service tee, located on the vacuum breaker and/or petcock (test cock) valve.
3. Turn controller to station #1 and start compressor.
4. Force air through station #1 until all water has been blown out (approximately 4 minutes per station). Continue this process through all active stations (#2, #3, and so on), until they have all been blown out completely.



5. Close the main supply (turn off water supply).



6. Turn controller to the "off" position for the Winter.

7. While your system can be drained without blowing it out, we do recommend blowing it out.

If you would like to schedule a sprinkler blow-out, please reach out to us in September at: 303-651-6897.



Mulches:

Wood mulch helps to suppress weeds and retain moisture around plants. It is also a great source of food for hungry microbes in the soil and because of this, it is very effective in building soil ecology. A good practice is to apply a fresh layer of mulch every couple of years.

Shredded cedar mulch is common in many new landscapes. It is attractive, smells good, and contains oils that help to suppress weeds. It is also slower to breakdown into the soil and costs more than other mulches.

Local wood chips are effective as well. They are good for restoring poor soils and retaining moisture for plants. They do not have the oils that cedar mulch does and therefore, will not keep weeds down as well. These wood chips are less expensive and even sometimes free from tree companies. Take caution as these wood chips can have weed seeds and fungal diseases in them.

Rock mulch can come in a variety of sizes. It will not break down into the soil and it will help retain moisture for plants and trees. It is also attractive and great to use in areas of high winds, along medians and roadside, or to define edges and curves in a landscape. When cleaning up organic matter and debris out of the rock, it is helpful to use a blower. This will help reduce weed seeds from germinating on top of the mulch.



Landscape Lighting:

It is recommended to inspect your lighting system periodically.



- Check the timer** to ensure the operating times are appropriate for the season.
- Check for burned out bulbs** and look for cut wires or cables in the yard. Make sure all connectors and pins are completely plugged in.
- Check the circuit breaker** on the transformer for any shorts and/or to make sure it hasn't been tripped. Also make sure that the transformer is functioning properly with correct voltage and amperage.

Ponds & Water Features:

The maintenance of a professionally installed water feature is simple and easy!

Water Level:

- Keeping the water level of the pond constant will ensure happy fish and plants. Check the water level regularly. Evaporation will occur with more pond surface area.

- Your pond may be equipped with an automatic fill valve connected to the irrigation system. It will turn on when the water level is low. This valve will get winterized and shut down with the rest of the irrigation system for the winter.



Algae:

Algae is present in our water supply and in the right conditions can multiply quickly. Keeping the pond aerated, using safe pond solutions, and using an ionizer can help. Also, adding marginal pond plants can help keep algae growth to a minimum, especially if you have fish and do not want to use chemicals.

Skimmer:

Most J&S Landscape water features are fitted with a skimmer. This takes in water and feeds it to the waterfalls and bio filter. The skimmer is fitted with a delicate net bag, which catches items like leaves and debris in your water feature. It is good practice to keep this bag cleaned at least once per month.



Biological Filter or Biofalls:

The fish, plants, and other live creatures in your water feature create waste. This can cause pH imbalance and potential for a toxic environment for aquatic life if not maintained. A biological filter will breakdown organic matter with bacteria colonies that the filter is inoculated with. This should be cleaned and re-inoculated once per year.

Pumps:

Your water feature is equipped with a state-of-the-art pump, designed to give you many years of continued service. Keeping the intake clear of debris will help it to run smoothly. If the pump stops working, be sure to check for a possible tripped circuit.

Lighting:

Most underwater lighting is low voltage. Check bulbs, circuits, power supply, and transformers to make sure they are functioning properly.

If any of these items are a problem, please give J&S Landscape a call for service.

Fish:

Fish are a wonderful addition to a pond. They add life and beauty and bring special considerations to the care of your water feature.

- Allow your pond to settle after filling it and give the biological filter 6-8 weeks to build up a population of bacteria. Be careful not to over-feed your fish and make certain that the water is rid of chlorine.

- Most ponds should have a diverse population of plants and insects to help sustain a diverse and supportive ecosystem in the pond.

Plants:

Plants are also an important part of the beauty and biological systems of your pond.

- Marginal pond plants (plants that grow in shallow water, partially out of water) will help oxygenate the water for your fish.



- Underwater plants provide cover for the fish and provide color and interest to the water feature.
- It may be necessary to thin and divide some of the plants out every few years. If you are in doubt, call the Extension Agent at: 303-776-4865.

Winterization:

This is the single most important operation for the continued success of your water feature. Below are some basic tips to maintain a pond in the Winter:

1. Completely shut it down and drain it. Remove the pump and store it where it will not freeze for the Winter. This is a good option if you do not have fish.
2. Leave your pond system operational. In all but the coldest weather, waterfalls and pumps will work just fine. A pond heater should be added in November and all systems except irrigation autofill valves can be left running. Remember to add water to your water feature as evaporation will continue in the Winter months.



More Tips...

- Leaves and organic debris should be removed from the pond in the Fall. You can also add beneficial bacteria for the cold weather and this will help break down leftover debris while keeping the water clear. The fish will go dormant for the season and will not need food until early Spring.
- In below-zero weather, be sure to watch for ice jams, which can send water over the banks and unintentionally empty a pond. Also, if your pond totally freezes over, do not break the ice, as the shock waves will kill your fish and could cause leaks in your water feature.



Spring Boot-Up:

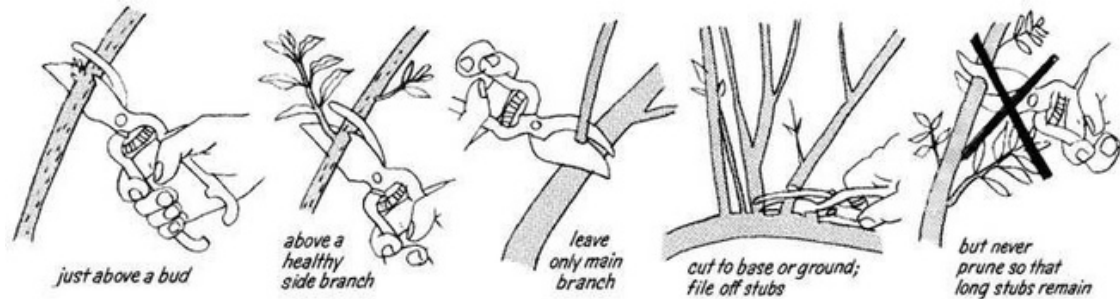
- In the Spring, you will want to clean your pond of any organic debris, cut your plants back, and make sure that all systems in your pond are functioning properly. This is also a good time to fertilize your plants and test your water.
- Remove your heater and/or bubbler and continue to clean the debris out while adding in new fresh water.
- Make sure to inspect and clean the intake in the pump to keep it running properly.
- You will also want to add a water conditioner to remove chlorine and ammonia. The conditioner will also detoxify heavy metals to help keep the fish healthy and the water clear.
- Lastly, add fish safe treatments to keep algae growth to a minimum and phosphate treatments to keep the water clear. You can find these solutions at: www.aquascape.com.



Monthly Landscape Checklist:

January & February:

Winter renewal pruning. Prune 25% or less of dead wood, downward or crossing limbs, water shoots and suckers from the base of trees and shrubs.



- Providing water to young plants and trees will help them to better survive dry spells and temperature swings throughout the Winter season.
- (Optional): Applying a dormant oil application can help to reduce Winter rot and keep pests away.
- Start to plan a Spring Garden!

March:

- Apply pesticide spray and Winter water if the season has been dry.
- Continue with garden planning and begin Spring clean-up.

April:

- Prune roses to live wood.
- Prune back herbaceous perennials.
- Freshen up mulch in landscape beds.
- Begin mowing operations (usually just twice in April).
- Apply lawn fertility.
- Remove tree wraps.
- Aerate lawn.

May:

- Turn on irrigation system after last frost date (usually after Mother's Day).
- Apply fertility for trees, shrubs, and perennials.
- Feed roses (rose fertilizer 4-8-4 ratio at: www.groworganic.com).
- Mulch beds if needed and install annuals (end of May).
- Adjust sprinkler timer for rain events or install a rain sensor.

June:

- Apply lawn fertility. Turf grass likes nitrogen! (Alfalfa meal is a good natural fertilizer and roses love it too).
- Continue mowing operations (weekly with an irrigated lawn).
- Check trees and shrubs for insects and pests.
- Fire blight occurs in apples and pears in Colorado, as well as a number of other tree and shrub varieties. Call our office for recommendations. Chemicals can be applied, but fruit may not be edible for up to 2 years. You can also prune off the dead growth to prevent more spreading.
- Inspect sprinkler system and adjust timing as needed.

July & August:

- Increase watering times due to warmer temps.
- Continue to allow days off on the watering schedule. This will keep the turf from developing fungus.
- Continue mowing operations and keep the grass blades around 3" tall so they do not burn.
- Head back annuals.
- (Optional): Lightly prune shrubs after flowering.
- Apply one more fertility to turf and beds before a final application in the Fall.
- Inspect sprinkler system operation/adjust timing as needed.

September:

- Apply Fall fertility to turf and beds.
- Continue mowing operations (taper back the mowing to twice per month).
- Wrap/insulate Pressure Vacuum Breaker (PVB).
- Begin Fall clean-up; leaf and debris removal.
- Plant Fall bulbs.
- Aerate lawn.

October:

- Clean off tops of dried perennials (unless leaving for Winter interest).
- Plant Fall bulbs.
- Adjust staking of new trees.
- Continue Fall leaf and debris clean-up (leave a little leaf debris around the base of shrubs and perennials for nesting butterflies).
- Reduce watering times on irrigation system.
- Shut down/winterize and blow out irrigation system before the first frost (around October 10th in Colorado).

November:

- Mulch roses and tender perennials.
- Wrap young trees at base for protection.
- Drain sprinkler system and disconnect garden hoses.
- Remove annuals.
- Finish any Fall clean-ups.

December:

- Winter water (if necessary).
- Start planning a Spring garden!

