

Let's Talk Trees

Ethics Loyalty Integrity Quality of Life



From Joe...What's New

While many of us at NPHC are sad that summer is over, we all appreciate the transition to autumn and the opportunities it provides for connecting with our valued customers. Fall is when we get to visit your properties for preventative services and spring project planning. It is also when we return to our newsletter and prepare for the Home Idea Show. But more than anything, harvest time reminds us of how grateful we are to serve your tree and plant health care needs.

When consumers tighten their budgets, they often look to discounts on retail items to help them stretch their dollar. However, when it comes to choosing a service, smart consumers know the best value is rarely the cheapest. At NPHC, our clients consistently tell us how much they value what we offer and we constantly strive to deliver on that promise regardless of economic conditions.

In order to ensure that we continue as your professionals of choice, we recently launched a Customer Care Survey. Many of you have responded and we want to extend our appreciation for your time spent sharing ideas and opinions. We take this information seriously as we know it is important for maintaining your confidence and trust. We look forward to sharing the final results in our winter issue, and again, thank you.

And speaking of confidence and trust, we are proud to share that NPHC has recently been awarded a recurring contract with the City of Spokane for "on-call Certified Arborist services." Our duties include consulting, air spading, pruning and removals. We earned this designation by competing against other local companies with resumes of experience pertinent to this type of work and were found to be the most qualified. We are excited about this new endeavor and feel it confirms our belief that we are the best tree care company in the region.

We cherish the beauty of our neighborhood and thank you for adding your landscaping professionalism and attention to detail.

~ Paul Cecil, President Best Hills Meadows HOA

In care of trees,

Joe Zubaly, President



We dig homeowners associations!

The COOL CROWD

Best Hills Meadows Homeowners Association

Established in 1992 and comprised of 106 homes, Best Hills Meadows is a beautiful place to live in Coeur d' Alene. Bordered by Best Hill to the south and Nettleton Gulch to the northeast, the community is nestled in a lovely meadow and surrounded by nature only minutes from downtown. Like many HOAs, the residents and board members take pride in the common area plantings throughout the development. At Best Hills these areas include a border of flowering pear, plum and crab apple trees along Best Hills Avenue as you enter the neighborhood, as well as two parks planted with varied native and ornamental plants.

NPHC has served many residences almost since inception and has helped maintain common area trees and shrubs for the last 5 years. We truly appreciate our relationship with these "cool" folks and look forward to many more enjoyable visits. ☺



NPHC Manager Ben Kappen shares some plant health care tips with Best Hills board member Ted McCaffree.

The benefits of fall pruning

by Ben Kappen

Autumn can signal a great opportunity to accomplish pruning objectives that may have been otherwise overlooked or delayed for various reasons. This month, as you clean up around the garden, take time to look at trees and shrubs to identify pruning that might be best dealt with before the next growing season.

Fall is a great time to address corrective or structural pruning needs, especially in trees. This can include the removal of dead or broken branches but it is important to identify structural defects as primary goals for live wood removal. Defects can include crossing or rubbing branches; narrow crotch angles and included bark; and co-dominant stems and excessively long or weighted limbs that can tear away from the trunk with snow/ice or wind load. Look for branches that rub against the house or that overhang a walkway, driveway or the roof.

Proper pruning of trees and shrubs before rough weather can make them less prone to storm damage and could prevent damage to structures or other plants. If removal of a defect will destroy the shape or represents a major loss of canopy that could potentially affect overall health, you may be able to cable and or brace the limb to secure and stabilize its position.

Pruning can also be used to control disease or insect infestations. Certain bacterial and fungal cankers can be identified and removed or congregations of damaging pests such as scales that will overwinter on trees and shrubs can be targeted.

Many overgrown shrubs can be pruned aggressively during fall to reduce size, rejuvenate shape or to stimulate bloom production the following season. Be sure you understand the attributes of your tree or shrub so as not to remove all of next season's flowers. ☞



A lovely willow tree shows off its new form after pruning by our Certified Arborists.

✓ Seasonal To Do List

- Apply systemic insecticides to control leaf feeders in 2011
- Treat lawn with pre-emergent weed control
- Cover roses
- Blow out sprinklers mid October
- Install fencing around trees to protect from deer damage
- Attend the Home Idea Show, October 10-11, Spokane Fairgrounds
- Visit GreenBluff for harvest time fun

Fall can be a busy time for families. To simplify life, pop this in the crock and love the results at dinner time! It's great with spinach salad and rolls. ~ Mama Kate

Kate's Crockpot Jambalaya

12 oz boneless, skinless chicken breast	1 can beef broth
2 green peppers, chopped	1 Tbsp dried parsley
1 med onion, chopped	1 1/2 tsp dried basil leaves
2 stalks celery, sliced	1 tsp Tabasco sauce (or more!)
4 cloves garlic, minced (or more!)	1/2 tsp dried oregano leaves
1 can (14 1/2 oz) whole tomatoes	1 tsp cayenne pepper
1/3 c tomato paste	3 C cooked rice
1 lb shelled shrimp (I use cooked salad type)	1/2 tsp salt

Cut raw chicken into 1-in. pieces. Add all ingredients except shrimp and rice to crock-pot. Cover; cook on Low 8-10 hours (or High for 3-4 hrs). Add shrimp last 15-30 minutes of cooking. Stir in rice when ready to serve. Optional: Sausage lovers can add sausage and, if you like more kick, increase spices for more flavor. Serves 6.

Easy Honey Dressing for your spinach salad: Stir together; ¼ c honey, ¼ c red wine vinegar, ½ Tbsp grape seed oil, 1 tsp Dijon mustard and ¼ tsp each salt and pepper. ☞



Did you know NPHC has eleven ISA Certified Arborists on staff? It's true! To learn more about how our tree care experts can help improve the health and vitality of your landscape, visit us online at NorthwestPlantHealthCare.com.



Ask the tree care experts



When should I turn sprinklers off and back on again?

Sprinkler systems should be turned off in the fall when the temperatures are cold enough to make the ground freeze. This usually happens after the air temperatures drop below 32 degrees and stay there for an extended period of time. A sudden cold snap for a day or two that freezes the air is usually not enough to cause the ground to freeze at a depth that will injure the lines of a well installed system.

In the spring, when the air temperatures increase to about 50 or 60 degrees and remain there long enough, the ground begins to thaw. At this point, irrigation systems can be turned on. It is a good idea to inspect the entire system, including manifolds, valves, heads, and emitters to ensure they are operating correctly and providing the plants with adequate coverage. ☞

How can I avoid winter injury to my plants?

To avoid winter injury, select plants that have a hardiness rating for the area you live in. For sensitive plants, choose a location that will minimize their exposure to the cold winter winds and sun. In the fall, wrap the trunks on young or thinly barked trees with a light colored material. Maintain plant health throughout the growing season and adjust the amount of available water with changes in temperatures.

During dry spells in the fall and early winter, provide your plants with supplemental water, paying attention to plants that are in pots, growing under overhangs, or those that are beneath large canopied trees. Be careful about applying high nitrogen fertilizers to plants that tend to exhibit late season growth, as the new growth does not usually have time to harden off before winter and is more likely to suffer damage. ☞



damage from dessication

DONALD LEWIS
AMERICAN ARBORIST
6 MAY 2009

The boxwood above shows injury due to loss of moisture from dry winter winds.

Who's hot!

Matt Kuebler

Matthew Kuebler is an ISA Certified Arborist who has been climbing trees for seven years. Originally from Seattle, Matt relocated to Spokane six months ago so his wife Kendra could study interior design at Washington State University. Since joining the NPHC team, Matt has proven himself a great addition to our pruning crew and approaches his responsibilities with dedication and a commitment to safety.

One of Matt's favorite things about working for NPHC is the crew. "The guys are so friendly and we have a real blast," he says. "They make work fun!" In his free time Matt enjoys hiking, climbing, snowboarding and scuba diving, although he admits he hasn't done much of the latter since moving to the east side of the state. ☞



powdery mildew

What's not!

Foliar Funguses

Whether it's powdery mildew, coryneum blight, anthracnose, or any of the numerous diseases that affect the leaves of plants, foliar fungi can be a real problem. Because they inhibit a plant's ability to produce energy and support itself, foliar fungi often cause the leaves to shrivel, turn brown, and prematurely fall from the tree. In addition, because these diseases can be unsightly they may render the plant unattractive in a surprisingly short time.

Due to the extremely wet spring, the presence of fungal diseases has greatly increased this year compared to a normal spring in the Inland Northwest. Some of these, like powdery mildew, are common in our area and have been exacerbated, while others, like Hawthorne leaf rust, are not usually an issue for us in a year of average rainfall.

The good news is no matter what foliar fungi are infecting your trees and shrubs, there are solutions, and the plant health care experts at NPHC are happy to help you restore your plants to a healthy state. ☞



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THE INSIDE DIRT
The benefits of fall pruning
Fighting foliar fungus
Meet Best Hills Meadows HOA

Preparing for the perfect patio

A three-part series on how to properly plan your landscape



Multiple seating areas increase functionality in this patio recently installed by NPHC.

Part 2: Hardscapes

When it comes to patios and other hardscapes, careful planning is a must as these areas can be some of the more expensive features in a landscape. Planning can take the form of a comprehensive landscape design or, in the case of an established landscape, it could be as simple as a penciled sketch. Either way there are several key things to consider to ensure a successful outcome for your project.

It is important to evaluate the following

- **Function** - Where is the patio located and what will it be used for? Do you normally spend time there? What is the position of the sun when you do spend time there? Will you entertain there? How close is it to the kitchen?
- **Form** - How it will look with the house? Should it have straight lines or curved? Are there other features like walls, fire pits or water features that would complement the patio? How will those affect the shape and size of the area?

Hardscape surfaces generally fall into the following categories

- **Concrete pavers** come in many sizes, from smaller than a brick to architectural slabs that measure 2'x2', and feature straight and tumbled edges, solid colors and blends. Running bond patterns work well for walk ways, herringbone patterns work with square patios or straight edges. Border or soldier courses help add a classy look.
- **Natural stone** also comes in different sizes up to 2'x4' and is available in many colors. Natural stone lends itself to more informal walks and irregularly shaped spaces.
- **Poured concrete** can be stamped and stained to look like just about any surface and may provide an economical alternative to natural products.

Other things to consider with hardscape projects are how water and electrical services will function with the new material. Whenever possible allow for irrigation lines and electrical conduit to pass under a patio. And, if the patio is sizable or if downspouts empty into the proposed area, arrange for proper drainage. ☞