



Safety 24/7 Education

Landscaping Safety

With longer days and warmer weather, many of us are spending more time working outdoors on our gardens and lawns. Before you grab the edge-trimmer or load up the wheelbarrow, take a moment to ensure you're following some best practices for safe yard work. Review the below information on landscaping safety. It's so easy to become so focused on our outside chores that we neglect to put our own safety first.

General Landscaping Safety Precautions

- Take regular rest breaks. Frequent short pauses are better than longer breaks further apart. In warm weather, take breaks in areas that are cooled or in shade. Similarly, in cold weather, take breaks in areas that are warm.
- Notify utilities of your intent to dig by calling 811 a few days before you plan to break ground. Your state 811 center will inform utility operators in your area that they need to mark any buried utility lines on your property with paint or flags.
- Use caution in areas where you may encounter wild animals or unfriendly domestic ones.
- Be aware of expected weather conditions for the day, and plan accordingly. Have plans about where to go if severe weather hits. Know where to seek shelter in a thunderstorm.
- Be aware of Lyme disease. Determine if ticks that spread the disease are in your area. Get medical assistance if you think you have been bitten by a tick.

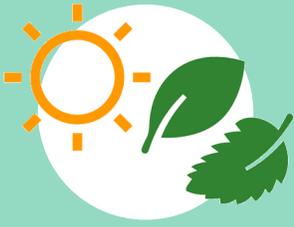


Personal Protective Equipment When Landscaping

- Wear personal protective equipment, including:
 - Head protection when working under branches or where there may be falling objects.
 - Appropriate eye protection whenever dust or debris may get into your eyes or when using strong cleaning agents, spraying, or dusting.
 - High-cut safety footwear with toe caps and reinforced, non-skid soles.
 - Hearing protection devices that provide appropriate protection from noise produced by equipment being used.
 - Wear respiratory protection if you must clean up waste, leaves, or dust that may contain mouse or bird droppings. Mice can carry the hantavirus which can become airborne with dust. Bird droppings can carry a microorganism that may cause psittacosis.
- Wear sturdy, well-fitting gloves with grip. The appropriate gloves needed may be vibration-absorbing gloves while operating vibrating equipment or chemical-resistant gloves when handling fertilizers, pesticides, and other chemicals.
- Wear lightweight long pants and long-sleeved shirts to help protect against both ultraviolet radiation (UV), ticks, or other insects.
- Protect yourself from the sun's UV radiation - use sunscreen with a SPF of 30 or higher and re-apply sunscreen as required throughout the day. Sunglasses may be worn to filter out the sun's ultraviolet rays.
- Do not wear loose-fitting or torn clothing that may become entangled in moving equipment.



Steps to Prevent Wildfires from Backyard Debris Burning



1.

Check the conditions. Don't burn when it's windy or when vegetation is very dry.

2.

Check local regulations. In your area, a permit may be required.

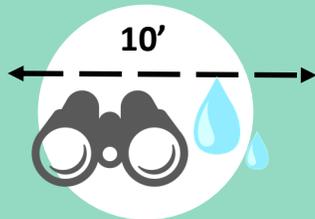


3.

Burn this, not that. You can burn dry, natural vegetation, grown on the property, unless prohibited by local ordinances. Household trash, plastic, or tires are not good to burn and are illegal to burn in some areas. Check your local ordinances.

4.

Look up. Choose a safe burning site away from power lines, overhanging limbs, buildings, vehicles, and equipment. You'll need at least three times the height of the pile of vertical clearance.



5.

Look around. The site should be surrounded by gravel or mineral soil (dirt) at least 10 feet in all directions. Keep the surroundings watered down during the burn and have a shovel close by.

6.

Prepare your pile. Keep your piles small and manageable. Add additional debris as the fire burns down.



7.

Using a burn barrel. If using a burn barrel, make sure it's made entirely of metal, properly equipped (at least three evenly-spaced, three-inch, screened vents, and metal top screen) and in good condition.

8.

Finish your burn. Whether it's a requirement in your area or not, always stay with your fire until it is completely out. Drown the fire with water, turn over the ashes with a shovel, and drown it again. Repeat several times.



9.

Check it. Check the burn area regularly over the next several days and up to several weeks following the burn, especially if the weather is warm, dry, and windy.

How to Use Herbicides Safely

Weeds and wild grasses are part of nature and, unfortunately, are an unwelcome guest in many lawns. Herbicides, when used properly, can be an important part of the weed solution. Learning to use herbicides safely is extremely important. It is even more critical for homeowners, since the law does not require it to be learned before spraying pesticides. Therefore, this page will help you.

Basic Herbicide Safety

The term “pesticide” includes herbicides as well as insecticides, rodenticides, and fungicides. Below are some basic herbicide safety tips.

- **Labels:** Always read the herbicide label completely before opening the container. Due to the length of the label, many are folded accordion style and taped closed. To view the entire label, you must peel back the tape first.
- **Clothing:** Make sure you have all the proper personal protection equipment (PPE) that is listed on the label before opening the container.
- **Spraying:** Always walk in and spray out; working away from the treated areas instead of spraying ahead and walking into the mist and wet vegetation. Direct the spray away from people, including yourself, and minimize overhead spraying.
- **Diluting:** Some herbicide solutions are concentrated and must be diluted with another liquid (usually water) for use. Do not add more herbicide than the maximum rate allowed on the label. Adding more than what is allowed will not give better pest control and, in most cases, it is illegal.
- **Mixing:** Estimate the area to be sprayed and try to mix only the amount you need. Do not dump any excess, but use the spray on the target pests.
- **Re-entry time:** Pay close attention to label instructions regarding re-entry times. The use of certain products may require that people or pets stay out of the sprayed area for a specific amount of time.
- **Storage:** Store all herbicides and pesticides, spraying equipment, and mixing containers away from the reach of children or pets. These chemicals must be kept in the original container with the label intact.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

All pest control products will contain instructions about personal protective equipment (PPE) to be worn. However, the label will only list the minimal amount of clothing required to keep you safe. You can always wear more protection, but you cannot wear less than what the label prescribes. In fact, it is a legal requirement. The following list contains some common PPE items listed on the label.

- Long sleeve shirt
- Long pants that reach the shoes
- Shoes, preferably chemical resistant shoes or boots
- Chemical-resistant gloves
- Goggles

Additional clothing you may want to consider are a hat, face shield, dust mask, disposable jump suit, or chemical-proof apron.



Washing and Hygiene

After applying herbicides, wash your hands and face before you eat or drink. You need to wash even though you’ve been wearing gloves.

Treat your work clothes as you would any heavily soiled clothing by washing them separately. Keep them away from other family members’ clothes. For best results, be sure your clothes are pre-soaked before washing them in a tub or washer. Your work clothes should be washed in HOT water, using the longest wash cycle, and using a heavy-duty detergent.

Head for the shower and use lots of HOT, soapy water. Shampoo your hair well and clean under your fingernails, you’ll remove herbicide residues and reduce your chances of ingesting a dose.