

# LANDSCAPE CARE GUIDE

**A comprehensive manual including basic care and tips for  
maintaining all of the elements of your new landscape.**



**SOUTHERN**  
LANDSCAPE GROUP, INC.

*Fine Landscaping Driven by Passion, Perfection & Professionalism*

# WELCOME













## FROM SOUTHERN LANDSCAPE GROUP

A beautiful landscape is as great for your soul as it is for your property value. It's one of those things that makes your home, well... home. It is the first thing you see when you pull up in the afternoon and it is the last thing you see when you back out in the mornings. It's the view from most windows in your home – the colors, textures and shapes frame your house like a Picasso original.

You have the option to create a landscape masterpiece that will complement your tastes or re-shape the ones you inherited. Either way, no matter how simple your landscape, it will require routine maintenance. With that in mind, your knowledge, level of interest, abilities, and budget all have to be factored into your decisions. Take a look at our comprehensive care guide that helps walk you through what is needed to maintain components of your new landscape.

Below is an index of the information contained in this guide. Each section is color coded to assist in locating needed information.

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### A. Basic Plant Health & Bed Maintenance

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## I. WATERING NEW PLANTINGS

- While it is difficult to recommend an exact amount of water to apply to a new or replacement plant due to variances in soil type and sun exposure; however, we can offer the following guidelines:
  - Perennials and annuals should receive 20 seconds of watering time
  - Shrubs should receive 45 seconds of watering time
  - Trees should receive two minutes of watering time
  - Below 70 degrees: Water each plant twice weekly
  - 70 - 80 degrees: Water each plant three times weekly
  - 80 - 90 degrees: Water each plant four times weekly
  - 90+ degrees: Water each plant daily
- Continue hand watering for approximately six weeks following installation. This should allow sufficient time for the newly installed plant's roots to establish.
- If you have a drip irrigation system, it is not designed to mediate soil moisture stress for newly installed landscape plants. The watering program outlined above is essential for their success. Please don't rely on your irrigation system to properly water your new plants.
- Check out our watering video at [bit.ly/SLGwatering](https://bit.ly/SLGwatering)



*Example of drought symptoms - leaf wilt.*



*Example of overwatering.*

## II. MULCH OPTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- All new plantings receive a fresh layer of mulch approximately 3" in depth. We use double shredded hardwood bark mulch. The mulch is screened very well in order for it to be as clean as possible from debris.
- Sometimes there is a slight odor from newly applied mulch. This typically only lasts a few days.
- Occasionally, after a hard rainfall, mulch may wash out. You can simply sweep or rake the mulch back into place. If there is significant washout, please take a photo and contact your landscape professional to address further.
- Within in the first two months after installation, the top layer of all mulch will slightly discolor from the sun. If using dyed mulch, this is less noticeable.
- When mulching next season, only apply a 1"- 1.5" layer of new mulch and do not install mulch above root flares and bases of plants. Avoid volcano-shaped mounds of mulch next to trunks of trees and plant stems - they promote disease and insects on and in plants.
- "Dog-vomit" fungus is a result of temperature fluctuations and moisture in the mulch. It is not harmful to humans or animals, but is very unsightly. The typical cycle of this fungus turns yellow to brown, then releases spores into the air. An easy control method is to remove the spot with a shovel and throw it away.

## II. MULCH OPTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS (CONTINUED)

### MULCH VARIETIES:

- **Dyed Mulch:** Typically dyed red, black, or brown. Lasts longer and holds color better than other varieties; however, it stains driveways, carts, tools, and hands if applied when wet. Allow it to dry before applying. It decomposes more slowly than non-dyed mulch, so you must be cautious not to let it accumulate.
- **Hardwood Mulch:** Fades quickly (2-3 months), great moisture holding capabilities, adds organic matter over time, most readily available.
- **Wood Chip Mulch:** Appears more rugged looking with larger chunks of debris, good organic value, decomposes slowly, helps with erosion control.
- **Pine Straw Mulch:** Decomposes slowly, fades quickly, no moisture insulation value, strictly a "look."
- **Pine Bark Nugget Mulch:** Decomposes slowly, minimal to no moisture insulation properties, can easily be blown out of beds in leaf removal operations.



*Proper bed mulching.*



*Common "dog-vomit" mulch fungus.*

## III. WEED CONTROL

- With daily watering, don't be surprised to see some weeds growing in new bed areas, even if they are treated with pre-emergent weed control.
- Prior to mulch installation, we apply a pre-emergent weed control to the planting beds to help prevent new weed germination. Products such as Preen or Corn Gluten (for an organic solution), are available to you at local garden centers. This is the most effective and least labor intensive way to greatly reduce weed growth in landscape beds. Chemical pre-emergent should be reapplied 90 days after initial application. If utilizing corn gluten, you may need to reapply monthly.
- Mulch is one of the best defenses against new weeds and should be reapplied annually.
- We do not recommend the use of landscape fabrics under mulch as they prevent the healthy exchange of moisture and oxygen. Furthermore, weed seeds will blow into the organic matter on top of the mulch fabric and they will germinate from there.
- Be sure to reference your landscape plan or online resources to double-check that a plant is indeed a weed prior to spraying or pulling. It may help to take pictures of your new plantings so when weeds begin to grow you can remove them early.

## WEED CONTROL (CONTINUED)

- We recommend purchasing a small spray tank and some weed killer from your local garden center box store. Spray as you notice weeds and within 24-36 hours you will see results. Use caution to avoid desirable plants and turf, as any plant that comes in contact with the spray will be damaged or killed. Once the weeds are dead, you can remove them by hand or let them decompose.
- When spraying, do not walk through the area you spray and then walk on your turf. The chemical will be transferred to the lawn from your shoes and it will look like a leprechaun came to visit you!
- An organic post-emergent weed control option, besides hand pulling, is to use a vinegar-based, non-selective herbicide like Eco Smart, Avenger, or Safer Brand weed killer.
- Be sure to read and follow all labels prior to mixing or applying any herbicide product. If in doubt, do not spray and contact your landscape professional.



Pre-emergent herbicide options.



Post-emergent herbicide options.

## IV. FERTILIZATION

- Proper landscape tree and shrub fertilization is necessary to promote healthy plant growth, flowering, fruiting, and prevent plant stresses that can lead to disease and insect problems.
- Application should be in the spring of the year between early March and early May. It should be applied around all trees, shrubs, and perennials. This timing provides nutrients as the plant emerges from dormancy.
- We recommend a granular, slow-release, all-purpose tree and shrub fertilizer with a 14-14-14 or 20-20-20 Nitrogen-Phosphorus-Potassium nutrient rating. These can be acquired through your local garden center under common brand names including Osmocote, Espoma Plant-Tone, Miracle-Gro Shake N Feed, etc.
- Acid loving plants need specialized fertilizer to absorb nutrients. The soil pH should be between 5.5-6.0 for these plants to survive.
- We recommend using Espoma Holly-tone organic acid loving fertilizer or Espoma Soil acidifier around these acid-loving plants two times per season.

## FERTILIZATION (CONTINUED)

- A short list of acid-loving plants is as follows: azaleas, rhododendrons, dogwoods, hydrangeas (if blue flowers are desired), pieris, mountain laurels, gardenias, camellias, holly, and hemlocks. See the resources section for links to determine if your plants require acidic soil.
- We recommending getting a soil sample at least once every three years. This is easily done by sending a sample from your turf and each landscaped area to the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service at Virginia Tech.



Plant-tone acid fertilizer.



Holly-tone organic.



Osmocote fertilizer.

## V. DISCOLORATION/LEAF-BRANCH DIEBACK

- All plants purchased for your landscape are grown in a controlled environment; whether it is in a greenhouse or a field. There are several methods in which plants are delivered, each with their own benefits and challenges. Regardless of the delivery method; once we plant them in your landscape, there is a chance that the plants will experience transplant shock as they are getting used to their new environment.
- You might notice browning or discoloration of some of the leaves or the plant may have a branch or small section that completely dies out. In these situations, remove the unsightly section of the plant. Due to seasonal changes of plant foliage, it is best to do this only during the growing season.
- With proper watering and oversight, the plant will typically recover. We have a saying in the industry for plant establishment that the first year they sleep, the second year they creep, and the third year they leap.
- If you have concerns, you can always snap a photo and send it to your landscape professional.



Chlorosis (yellowing) from nutrient deficiency. Not to be confused with variegated plants.



Stem/branch dieback of rhododendron.

## VI. GENERAL PRUNING & CUTBACK

### Reasons to prune:

- To eliminate hazards such as dead or dying branches.
- To remove crossed or rubbing branches.
- To increase light or movement of air in the center of the plant (especially important for boxwoods).
- To remove lower branches of trees to provide clearance for cars, buildings, pedestrians, etc.
- To reduce the size of a tree to accommodate a utility line.

### General pruning and cutback guidelines:

- You may remove dead or dying branches from trees and shrubs at any time of the year. Crossed or rubbing branches should be removed in the winter dormant period.
- Before perennials begin to grow in the spring season, be sure you have removed all dead foliage from the previous season. This will ensure a thick, healthy flush of growth in the spring.
- Ornamental grasses: Most people elect to cut grasses back to the ground in the early spring because of the winter interest that the grasses provide in the landscape. However, all dead foliage should be removed to the ground and raked out of the central clump before the next growing season.
- Liriope: It is best to cut back this plant in the spring so that the leaves protect the root system over the winter months.
- Common perennials: daylilies, sedum, catmint, black-eyed susan's, purple coneflower, and coreopsis can be cut back in the fall. However, some perennials provide seed or cover for wildlife in the winter. If you can tolerate the broken branches and foliage you may enjoy more birds and small animals in the winter.
- Shrubs that flower before June 15th should be pruned soon after flowering. Pruning these shrubs in the early spring or late summer/fall will cut off the flower buds and thus the flowers. This includes plants like: lilac, deutzia, weigela, dogwood, forsythia, viburnum, azalea, rhododendron, and pieris.
- Shrubs that bloom after June 15th should be pruned in the early spring by March 15th. These shrubs bloom only on stems that were produced in the same year. These plants include: spiraea, crape myrtle, russian sage, and butterfly bush.
- Hydrangeas: As a rule of thumb it is best to prune them for thinning and crown reduction in either the fall or winter. Deadheading should be done in late winter if you want to enjoy the dried flower heads that will persist through snow.
- Roses: Winter is the best time to prune roses and this plant will push out new growth and new buds. Roses can be deadheaded in the summer to encourage continued blooming. This is a time-consuming process and is not mandatory, but will enhance the look of the plant and extend the bloom period. Certain specialty varieties of cut flower roses need to be pruned on a weekly basis to promote continual blooming: these include Hybrid Tea, Floribunda, and Grandiflora varieties. We recommend consulting your landscape professional for the best method of pruning these varieties.

## VI. GENERAL PRUNING & CUTBACK (CONTINUED)

- Boxwoods: In general, boxwoods tend to keep their shape best without pruning. If they become unruly, hand pruning of boxwoods is the best method and can be done at any time. Always use sharp and disinfected tools to prevent the spread of diseases. Boxwoods can be kept as individual plants, rounded, or hedged together in a continuous row. We do not recommend the use of electric or gas powered hedge clippers to prune boxwoods as they tend to tear the plants leaves and cause tip browning. Ironically, tight shearing into formal shapes also encourages uneven growth requiring more frequent pruning. If you need more in-depth boxwood rejuvenation pruning, please consult your landscape professional.

## VII. WINTER: SNOW, ICE DAMAGE & PREVENTION

- Snow can actually be great for plants because it provides insulation from extreme temperatures and consistent moisture during a typically dry season.
- Do not remove snow from branches or plants; you will likely do more damage than good. Plants are much more durable than you may think.
- Wait until the snow melts to assess damages and prune broken branches with a flush, clean cut.
- Snow and ice may fall off roofs and onto your landscape plantings, causing damage.
- Evergreen plants may take on a red or brown hue from exposure to cold, dry winds called winter burn. This may be unsightly but will disappear with the first warm days of spring.
- Sensitive plants like loropetalum, gardenia, and daphne can be wrapped with a sheet for protection from extreme cold temperatures and frosts.



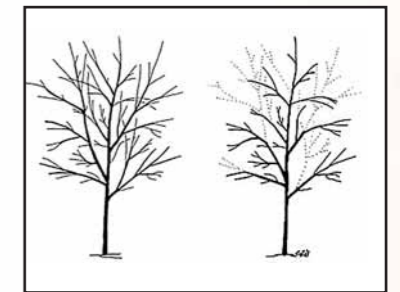
Poorly pruned crape myrtle.



Poorly sheared boxwood.



Ornamental grass cut back.



Structural pruning of young trees.



## B. New Lawn Maintenance & Care

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## I. SEEDED LAWN CARE

- A lawn that is started from seed typically takes three years to become fully established, provided you follow a regimented turf fertilization program and irrigate properly.
- Seeded lawns will typically have more weeds introduced because of the use of straw. These can be controlled by applying a broadleaf turf herbicide after the first three mowings.
- If you have a chemical lawn service, be sure to notify them that new areas of the yard have been seeded.
- Newly seeded fescue lawns should receive their first mowing once the grass is 4"-5" tall. This may take four to six weeks during the regular growing season.
- Allowing the grass to get too tall and lay over can kill some of the new turf or cause it to be smothered by the clumping.
- When mowing, do not cut the lawn lower than 4".
- Straw will help insulate and keep the seed moist to allow for faster germination.
- Loose straw can simply be mowed over and bagged, or lightly raked up after the first mowing.
- We recommend straw netting be removed prior to the first lawn mowing.



*Straw netting example (Must be removed).*



*Loose straw on newly seeded lawn.*

## II. SODDED LAWN CARE

- Newly sodded lawns should be mowed for the first time when grass reaches 4-5" high. Be sure the sod is firmly rooted by trying to lift several pieces around the yard.
- Turn off your irrigation for two days prior to mowing for the soil to firm up and allow for foot and mower traffic.
- Set your mower deck height at a minimum of 4".
- If possible, bag the clippings. If bagging is not possible, then you may need to rake the cuttings from the sod. Thatch will easily kill new grass.
- Occasionally, seams between the sod pieces will open up. Add small amounts of topsoil and seed in the fall.



*Seams in newly sodded lawn are not abnormal.*



*Six week old sodded lawn.*

## III. FERTILIZATION

- Southern Landscape Group fertilizes the soil at installation with a high phosphorus fertilizer to stimulate root growth (14-28-14).
- We recommend following our turf fertilization program below. If you enjoy doing this work yourself, you can use Scott's turf products for all applications listed below. Visit [www.scotts.com/en-us/my-lawn](http://www.scotts.com/en-us/my-lawn)

### A. The type of grass you have is Turf-Type Tall Fescue

- A typical fertilizer program for a new or established lawn would be as follows:
  - Round 1: Early spring fertilizer with pre-emergent (March)
  - Round 2: Spring fertilizer with pre-emergent & blanket broadleaf weed control (May)
  - Round 3: Summer fertilization and spot spray broadleaf weed control (June)
  - Round 4: Fertilizer and blanket broadleaf weed control (September)
  - Round 5: Fertilizer and spot weed control (November)

## III. FERTILIZATION (CONTINUED)

- We also recommend shattertine aeration, over-seeding, and fertilization each fall.
  - This standalone service will help keep your lawn thick and healthy.
  - Aerating the lawn introduces oxygen, moisture, and most importantly, grass seed, to the root zone.
  - Overseed using turf-type tall fescue at the rate of 5 lbs. per 1,000 SF.



## IV. IRRIGATION & WATERING

- Initial establishment of turf will require multiple waterings for short periods of time. This will prevent run-off and erosion from too much water on bare soil.
- We typically recommend irrigation sprinklers be set to run three times per day at 4 AM, 11 AM, and 4 PM for short intervals of 5-20 minutes depending on sprinkler coverage and soil type.
- As your turf starts to germinate (two weeks), you can take out the 11 AM watering. After another week, you can typically cut back watering to once per day, and preferably in the early morning. By four weeks, you should be able to resume your normal irrigation program.
- Slow, deep watering is ideal for established turf. Providing approximately 1" of water weekly should be your goal.
- You can measure this by installing a few rain gauges around your property to monitor your watering habits.
- Prolonged, late afternoon watering may burn turf from light refracting through the water droplets (like a magnifying glass). It also has the greatest evaporation losses; therefore, early morning watering is the best.
- If there are areas of turf that seem slow to germinate, first check the sprinkler coverage to be sure you have adequate moisture.



*Automatic irrigation system.*



*Manual lawn irrigation.*



*Rain gauge in turf.*





## C. Irrigation Systems

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## I. START UP / SHUT DOWN/ SEASONAL ADJUSTMENT

- Know how to stop your irrigation system in the event of an emergency:
  1. Turn off your irrigation controller (open and turn dial to off position).
  2. Turn off your irrigation pump (cut breaker off to pump power).
  3. Turn off your municipal water supply (at the meter or backflow).

### Irrigation start up:

- Activate your water supply system.
- Replace battery in your irrigation controller.
- Replace battery in your wireless rain sensor (if applicable).
- Activate your rain sensor:
- Operate all irrigation zones from the controller and perform the following tasks:
  - a) Check heads for leaky seals.
  - b) Ensure proper adjustment to heads.
  - c) Ensure lateral lines are leak free.
- Test backflow prevention device and submit paperwork to appropriate authority.



Automatic irrigation controller.

### Irrigation shut down:

- Turn off water supply.
- Evacuate water from pipes by blowing compressed air through them.
- Drain backflow device.
- Power down irrigation controller.

### Season adjustment:

- Operate each zone from the controller.
- Adjust water flow rates to accommodate current climate.
- Ensure rain sensor is operational.
- Be sure to locate and mark irrigation heads before overseeding.

## II. RAIN SENSORS

- Most irrigation systems that are installed come with a rain sensor: This device is a small cork mounted to your gutter that sends a signal to your irrigation controller to shut off when a certain amount of rainfall is detected.
- Occasionally the irrigation system will be on and running its cycle while it is raining; this simply means there hasn't been enough rainfall detected by the sensor to shut it off.
- It is important to check these devices annually to make sure they are mounted properly and that there is a good battery in place.



Automatic irrigation rain sensor.



## D. Landscape/ Low-Voltage Lighting

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## I. CONTROLLERS/TIMERS

- There are many different controllers and timers. We install lighting systems that come with an astronomical timer which automatically adjusts to daylight savings time.
- Some will also come equipped with a photoelectric eye that automatically detects when it is dawn or dusk.
- The controller/timer is typically in a metal box next to an electrical outlet on the exterior of your home. It should be clearly marked on your landscape utility plan.
- Your landscape professional will demonstrate how to adjust your timer at your final walkthrough.



*Digital astronomic timer.*



*Remote photocell.*



*Lighting controller.*

## II. SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

- After the lighting system has been installed and is operational, within the first week we will visit your property to evaluate the design and make minor adjustments.
- Each design is unique and each client's taste is different, so we will make the appropriate adjustments to give you the look that fits your function and tastes.



## E. Masonry & Pavers

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## I. SEASONAL MAINTENANCE

- Pavers, natural stone patios, and walkways will last a lifetime if properly cared for.
- Pavers, when initially installed, may have a light “haze” over them from the polymeric sand installation. This will slowly wear away, but may last up to 45 days.
- Pavers will sometimes leach calcium after initial installation. This white deposit is referred to as “efflorescence” and can be cleaned off with specialty paver cleaners.
- Weed seeds will blow into sanded joints over time and germinate. It is best to treat these with a weed killer as they pop up to ensure that the weeds do not regerminate.
- Pavers and natural stone typically should be cleaned and re-sanded every 3-5 years to maintain a clean look and to prevent weed growth. Areas in heavy shade may need to be cleaned more frequently as moss and algae will grow in the porous surface.
- Natural flagstone can cleft or flake slightly over time. This is due to natural veins within the stone, not as a result of defective stone.



## II. WINTER MAINTENANCE

- Pavers and stone are not immune to staining or ice melts. Over time the salts will erode the pavers leaving pits.
- Keep ice melts and rock salts off your pavers if possible. If you must use ice melt, be sure to use a type that is safe for concrete applications (non-dyed calcium chloride).
- We recommend that you clean snow off manually with a shovel or snow blower (snow blowers may leave scratches if used improperly) and use de-icing salts to spot treat areas that refreeze.



## III. MORTAR JOINTS

- Your flagstone may be mortared to a concrete slab. This means they have grout joints similar to tile.
- Over a period of years, these joints can become loose or cracked. This can be easily fixed by removing the old grout and applying new mortar into the joints.
- Cleaning and sealing these joints will help to prolong the life of the mortar by preventing water and ice from entering them. We recommend sealing them every 3-5 years with a siloxane penetrating sealer.



## IV. POLYMERIC JOINT SAND

- Polymeric joint sand is a flexible composite that binds to the pavers or stone providing a tight joint that will not crack like mortar, but inhibits weed growth.
- The polymeric sand doesn't guarantee total weed prevention but will prevent most weeds from germinating.





## F. Outdoor Kitchens

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## I. APPLIANCE MAINTENANCE

- Just like the inside of your home, outdoor appliances require cleaning to keep the kitchen operating and looking its best.
- Purchase a good stainless steel and granite cleaner. A small power washer or high pressure garden hose is excellent for washing away debris, dirt, mold, etc.
- Be sure to cover your grill, sink, or side burner to prevent rain from finding a way into the appliance. This will prolong the life of these items.
- Sometimes the electric igniter on a grill may fail or you find other parts that are inoperative. If your product is still under warranty, you can contact the manufacturer directly. If you have trouble, you can always call Southern Landscape Group's main office line.



## II. WINTERIZATION & SEASONAL MAINTENANCE

- Be sure to disconnect and drain the "P" trap under the sink to prevent freezing. Shut off water supply and drain the line.
- If you have a tankless hot water heater connected to the sink, be sure to unplug and disconnect it as well as drain this appliance.
- Be sure to cover grills, smokers, side burners, and other countertop appliances to prevent snow and ice from entering.
- Be sure to keep your drain screens installed so debris does not enter your drainage pipes and create a clog.
- If you have an outdoor refrigerator or kegorator, be sure to unplug and defrost prior to winter to reduce energy consumption and prevent coils from freezing.

## III. COUNTER & HARD SURFACE MAINTENANCE

- If you have a granite or natural stone countertop for your grilling island, these should be cleaned only with an appropriate natural stone cleaner.
- Keeping food and other debris off the countertop just like your kitchen will prolong the life and look of it.
- Your granite may require sealing every 3-4 years. We recommend that you contact Stanley Steamer to schedule this service.



## IV. LP & NATURAL GAS SAFETY

**IF YOU HAVE A GAS EMERGENCY, SHUT OFF THE GAS SUPPLY, EVACUATE THE AREA & CALL 911.**

### APPLIANCE GAS MAINTENANCE

- **LEAVE IT TO THE EXPERTS.** Only a qualified service technician has the training to install, inspect, service, maintain, and repair your appliances. Have your appliances and propane system inspected just before the start of each heating season.
- **HELP YOUR APPLIANCES "BREATHE."** Check the vents of your appliances to be sure that flue gases can flow easily to the outdoors; as well as clear away any insect or bird nests or other debris. Also, clear the area around your appliances so plenty of air can reach the burner for proper combustion.
- **HAVE OLDER APPLIANCE CONNECTORS INSPECTED.** Certain older appliance connectors may crack or break, causing a gas leak. If you have an appliance that is more than 20 years old, have a qualified service technician inspect the connector.
- **FLAMMABLE VAPORS ARE A SAFETY HAZARD.** The pilot light on your propane appliance can ignite vapors from gasoline, paint thinners, and other flammable liquids. Be sure to store and use flammable liquids outdoors or in an area of the building containing no propane appliances.
- **DON'T RISK IT!** If you cannot operate any part of your propane system, or if you think an appliance or other device is not working properly, call your propane retailer.

### WHEN LIGHTING PILOT LIGHTS:

- It is strongly recommended that only a **QUALIFIED SERVICE TECHNICIAN** light any pilot light that has gone out. **DO NOT** try to fix the problem yourself. If a pilot light repeatedly goes out or is very difficult to light, there may be a safety problem.
- **YOU ARE TAKING THE RISK** of starting a fire or an explosion if you light a pilot light yourself. Carefully follow all of the manufacturer's instructions and warnings concerning the appliance before attempting to light the pilot.

### IF YOU DETECT A GAS LEAK:

- Immediately evacuate everyone from the house and call your local propane provider or the fire department from a neighbor's telephone.
- Learn what propane smells like. Propane retailers print scratch-and-sniff pamphlets to help your family recognize its distinctive odor.
- Call 811 before you dig. Know where gas lines are located, so you won't damage them when digging or working in the yard.
- Change or clean furnace filters regularly as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Don't store cleaning fluids, oil-soaked rags, gasoline, or other flammable liquids near a gas-burning appliance where vapors could be ignited by the pilot light.

### IF YOU ARE RUNNING OUT OF GAS:

- Serious safety hazards could occur, including fire or explosion, so don't run out of gas.
- If your propane tank runs out of gas, any pilot lights on your appliances will go out. This can be extremely dangerous.
- If an appliance valve or a gas line is left open, a leak could occur when the system is recharged with propane.
- **A LEAK CHECK IS REQUIRED.** In many states, a propane retailer or a qualified service technician must perform a leak check of your propane system before turning on the gas.

### IF YOU SMELL GAS:

- No flames or sparks! Immediately put out all smoking materials and other open flames. Do not operate lights, appliances, telephones, or cell phones. Flames or sparks from these sources can trigger an explosion or a fire.
- Leave the area immediately! Get everyone out of the building or area where you suspect gas is leaking.
- Shut off the gas. Turn off the main gas supply valve on your propane tank if it is safe to do so. To close the valve, turn it to the right (clockwise).
- Report the leak. From a neighbor's home or other nearby building away from the gas leak, call your propane retailer right away. If you can't reach your propane retailer, call 911 or your local fire department.
- Do not return to the building or area until your propane retailer, emergency responder, or qualified service technician determines that it is safe to do so.
- Get your system checked. Before you attempt to use any of your propane appliances, your propane retailer or a qualified service technician must check your entire system to ensure that it is leak-free.

### CAN YOU SMELL IT?

- Propane and natural gas smells like rotten eggs, a skunk's spray, or a dead animal. Some people may have difficulty smelling propane due to their age (older people may have a less sensitive sense of smell); a medical condition; or the effects of medication, alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.
- **Odor Loss.** On rare occasions, propane can lose its odor. Several things can cause this including:
  - The presence of air, water, or rust in a propane tank or cylinder.
  - The passage of leaking propane through the soil.
- If there is a possibility of odor loss or problems with your sense of smell, you should respond immediately to even a faint odor of gas.



## G. Decks, Arbors, Pergolas & Wood Structures

Wood Maintenance & Cleaning	Pg. 35
Composite Decking Maintenance & Cleaning	Pg. 35
Vines on Structures	Pg. 35
Additional Resources	Pg. 35

## I. WOOD MAINTENANCE & CLEANING

- Routine maintenance is essential in prolonging the life of these structures and to keep up their appearance.
- We recommend staining and/or sealing the wood every 3-5 years to protect the wood from rot and decay.
- Annual cleaning and power washing will help remove contaminants, mildew, and mold; keeping these structures looking like new.
- Be sure to monitor for pests like termites, wood boring beetles, and bees around these structures. If you see any evidence of pest activity, contact your local exterminator to assess and treat the problem.

## II. COMPOSITE DECKING MAINTENANCE & CLEANING

- There is very little maintenance for composite materials.
- We recommend cleaning these structures annually with a mild detergent (oxygenated bleach) and scrubbing.
- You may also power wash to remove mildew and mold growth between seasons.



## III. VINES ON STRUCTURES

- If you have climbing vines on your trellis or pergola structures these need to be routinely pruned to maintain shape and reduce weight on these structures.
- Some vines like clematis, honeysuckle, trumpet vine, and wisteria can be cut back almost to the ground in winter to remove dead material. This is recommended every 3-4 years to thin out the vines and allow access to inspect the structure or perform maintenance like painting or staining.



## IV. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Trex Decking Resources ([trex.com](http://trex.com))

James T. Davis in Lynchburg, and Moneta Farm & Home at SML are great resources for purchasing stains and sealers for your wood structures. ([jamestdavis.com](http://jamestdavis.com)) ([monetafhc.com](http://monetafhc.com))

Capps Building Supply - Moneta, VA ([shopcapps.com](http://shopcapps.com))

## H. Fire Pits & Fireplaces

Gas Log Maintenance/Features

Pg. 37

Wood Burning Maintenance/Features

Pg. 37

## I. GAS LOG MAINTENANCE/FEATURES

- Be sure to keep the gas line valve off when you aren't using it. Make sure all users know how to cut off in an emergency.
- Be sure to keep a cover over the pit when not in use to prevent water from entering. This will prolong the life of your fire pit.
- Be cautious when roasting marshmallows over a gas fire. If the marshmallow melts, it will stick to the lava rock and gas logs.



*Fire pit cover.*

## II. WOOD BURNING MAINTENANCE/FEATURES

- Wood burning fire pits/places are lined with firebrick to prevent stones from cracking, and to prolong the life of the fire pit.
- We suggest burning hardwoods (oak, ash, and maple) for fires as often as possible since they produce the least amount of creosote and burn very well.
- We recommend a spark screen for your fire pit if you are in a heavily wooded area. This will help prevent hot embers from traveling, potentially causing fires.
- Be sure not to build a fire too large for your fire pit. This can cause damage to the pit.
- Never use water to extinguish a fire unless it is an emergency.



*Fire pit spark screen.*

## I. Water Features/Ponds/Pondless

Water Garden Seasonal Maintenance	Pg. 39
Plants & Fish Care	Pg. 39
Pumps & Auto Fillers	Pg. 40
Fountain & Pondless Water Feature Maintenance	Pg. 40

## I. WATER GARDEN SEASONAL MAINTENANCE

- One of the greatest features of the Pondless® Waterfall Filter is that there is very little maintenance. The system can be run 24 hours a day or can be turned off and on when desired. Don't forget to periodically check that there is enough water in the Pondless Waterfall basin to properly operate the waterfalls. When you hear the pump "gurgling" or sucking air, you know it is time to add water.
- Place the clean-out pump in the deepest point of the pond, or in the Pondless Waterfall's Snorkel, in order to remove the water. Drain the water into the surrounding landscape. Be sure to relocate the pipe two or three times to allow the water to seep into the ground and not flood the yard.
- Discontinue bacteria treatments when the water temperature reaches 50 to 55 degrees. The bacteria does not grow at these temperatures, and using them would be a waste of money.
- If your pond is located where you will get leaves or pine needles in your pond, we recommend that you purchase netting to net the pond until the leaves are finished falling. If your pond is not netted, leaves and other matter decompose and produce harmful gases throughout the winter.
- Remove the net when the leaves are finished falling and pack it away for another year. We have three sizes of our economical netting.



## II. PLANTS & FISH CARE

- If you have fish, use some of this pond water to fill up the holding pool. A net can be used to remove the fish once the water is low enough. This way you can easily catch them.
- Don't keep the fish in the holding pool for more than several hours. Instead, keep them in a shady spot with a net over the top of the pool to prevent them from jumping out.
- Before the first frost, be sure to remove all of your tropical plants. Either put them in an area where you can store them for the winter, or add them to your compost pile. Clean up the debris out of the bottom of the pond as best you can. Use a large net or a plastic rake.
- When the first killing frost comes, you can then clean up all plants and cut back your perennials to the water level and dispose of all the old plant material. Cut back the lilies to 3" above the rhizome.
- If they are in pots, drop the pot to the deepest part of your pond.
- Stop fertilizing the plants as soon as the water temperature gets below 70 degrees.

### III. PUMPS & AUTO FILLERS

- If you live in an area that does not experience severe winters, YOU CAN LEAVE YOUR PUMP RUNNING 24/7 without a problem. Moving water keeps the area around the waterfall and skimmer open. You will, however, have to add water to your pond. If you have a stream, you may have to add water more frequently. The benefit of running the falls is that Mother Nature makes extraordinary, natural ice sculptures, icicles, and abstract formations. A great photo opportunity!
- You must be careful with ponds that have long, or slow-moving streams. In such cases, ice dams can form and divert water over the liner. In this case, we recommend that you observe your pond for the first season on extremely cold day, in order to be sure that everything is running smoothly.
- In addition, ponds with waterfalls operating through the winter will experience some evaporation.
- Periodically, CHECK YOUR WATER LEVEL and add water if necessary.



*Waterfall ice sculptures.*

### IV. FOUNTAIN & PONDLESS WATER FEATURE MAINTENANCE

#### I. System Start Up:

- Each spring, if your water feature was winterized, it will be time to prepare it for the upcoming season. Follow these simple steps:
  - a. Remove pond netting, if applicable.
  - b. Reconnect water feature pump and activate if applicable.
  - c. Activate auto-fill device, if equipped, to ensure proper operation.
  - d. Reset plant materials around water feature as needed.
  - e. Clean bio falls and skimmer filter.
  - f. Add biological bacteria.



*Auto-fill device.*

#### 2. In-Season Maintenance:

- Monitoring water levels is the most critical element of water feature care in-season. If your water feature is equipped with an auto-fill device, make sure it is operating correctly. If you do not have an auto-fill device it will be important that you monitor the water feature. The smaller the feature, the more frequently it will need to be filled.
- Algae management is another challenge with water features. Regardless of the stop gap measures you have in place, you will get some amount of algae in your pond. Here are some features that help limit the amount of algae in your pond:
  - UV Lights.
  - Barley Bales.
  - Balance of fish, plants and snails.
  - Keep the water feature shaded as much as possible by using surface covering plants such as water lilies or lotus.
  - Water features with no fish or plants can use a chlorine tablet once per week.

#### 3. End Of Season Winterization

- Pump Maintenance: If your water feature flows less than 3,000 gallon per hour, it will be necessary to winterize your feature as it will not move enough water to prevent freezing.
  - If able, remove pump from water feature and store in a dry place where temperature will not drop below 40 degrees.
  - If unable to remove pump, you can add 2-4 gals of RV antifreeze (non-toxic) to the pondless water feature basin which will prevent freeze damage.
- Pond: If the pump is in 12+'' of water, disconnect the pipes and leave in the skimmer basket
  - Plant Maintenance: It is ideal to cut back foliage on all plants and move them to the center of the pond where the water is the deepest.
  - Fish maintenance: Stop feeding fish and adding beneficial bacteria after the water temp drops below 55 degrees.
  - If you have a shallow pond with fish (less than 12''), it may be necessary to add a pond heater to prevent the pond from freezing all the way to the bottom.
  - If your water feature runs during the winter, it is very important to monitor for ice dams in freezing temperatures and to keep the pond or basin filled. Ice dams can route water out of the pond/basin and cause the pump to run dry.
  - Remember auto-fill devices must be winterized prior to freezing temperatures.
- We recommend covering your water feature in the winter if it is a glazed pot or urn. In the event you still experience algae there are a few ways to help clean it:
  - Manually remove it from the pond using a net or your hands.
  - Use of algaecides – MUST FOLLOW SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS.
  - Use of non-chemical products like Algae-Off which releases the algae from rocks and can then be removed by means of net.
  - Light power washing of the water feature.



*Glazed pots should be winterized and covered.*

**J. Pools and Spas**

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## I. NORMAL FILTRATION MODE

The pump pulls water from the main drain and skimmer. (It is best to pull the majority of the water from the pool surface. That is why the main drain is throttled.) The water is then pumped through the sand filter, where dirt and debris are removed. When the water leaves the filter, it is routed through the heater. The water is then returned to the inlet fittings located around the pool.

### POOL VALVE POSITIONS FOR NORMAL FILTRATION:

VALVE NAME	POSITION
SKIMMER	OPEN
VACUUM	CLOSED
MAIN DRAIN	THROTTLED
MULTI-PORT VALVE	FILTER

Determine the location of the main drain valve as follows:

1. Begin with the main drain valve in the full open position. (Handle is in line with the pipe)
2. With the pump operating, begin closing the main drain valve until the pump begins to cavitate. Cavitation occurs when a pump cannot receive as much water from the suction as it is capable of discharging. The sound of the motor will change, usually becoming louder.
3. Open the valve slightly until the cavitation ceases.

## II. CLEANING BASKETS & FILTERS

The skimmer contains a basket, which will catch large debris. The baskets must be checked often and cleaned when necessary. Another basket is located at the front of the pump. This basket is called a hair and lint strainer. It must be checked several times per week and cleaned as required.

The filter removes the smaller debris by trapping the debris on the top layer of sand. As the filter removes the dirt and debris from the pool water, it will become harder for the pump to force the water through the sand bed because the dirt causes a restriction on the top layer of sand. The filter should be cleaned when the pressure on the tank increases 3 to 5 psi over the clean filter pressure. The filter is cleaned by backwashing. Backwashing reverses the flow of water through the filter and lifts the dirt and debris off the top layer of sand and pumps it out the waste line.

### III. BACKWASHING

To perform the backwash operation, first shut off the heater and pump. **Warning: Always turn off the pump when changing the position of the multiport valve.** If there is a backwash valve present, you must open the backwash valve prior to backwash, waste or rinse cycles. Change the multi-port valve handle position to the BACKWASH position. Start the pump. The water will be pumped through the filter backwards, washing dirt and debris from the sand bed and out of the backwash line. The filter should be backwashed until the water appears clear in the sightglass located on the backwash line. The backwash operation should only take 1 to 2 minutes. Stop the pump and change the position of the multiport valve handle to the RINSE position. Start the pump and run for approximately 15 seconds. Stop the pump again. Change the position of the multi-port valve handle to the FILTER position. Start the pump, and watch for the filter pressure to return to the normal operating range.

### IV. BRUSHING & VACUUMING

Larger debris will settle onto the floor and walls of the pool. This debris can be removed by brushing and vacuuming the pool. It is good practice to brush the pool walls and floor weekly. This will help prevent metals and other sediment from becoming embedded in the pool plaster. Brushing will stir up very fine particles, which may then be removed by the filtration system. Larger particles can be removed by vacuuming the pool. The waterline tile should be cleaned as needed to remove built up body oils, pollen, etc. Use a pool tile and vinyl cleaner with a non-metallic scrub brush to clean the tile.

Instructions for vacuuming the pool with vacuum fitting:

1. Attach the vacuum hose to the vacuum head, and the vacuum head to the telescopic pole.
2. Remove the plug from the vacuum fitting. This fitting is located near the light. Thread the hose adapter into the vacuum fitting.
3. Place the pole, vacuum head, and hose into the water. Try to remove as much air as possible from the hose by dunking. When the hose is full of water, connect it to the hose adapter.
4. The skimmer line can be throttled in order to increase the suction of the vacuum; however, do not let the pump cavitate. Note: The vacuum head must remain underwater at all times when connected to the vacuum fitting.
5. When finished, reset all valves to their normal filtration position. Remove the hose adapter from the vacuum fitting. Be sure to replace the vacuum plug!

The hair and lint strainer and/or the filter may require cleaning during or after vacuuming the pool.

Instructions for vacuuming the pool through skimmer:

1. Attach the vacuum hose to the vacuum head, and the vacuum head to the telescopic pole.
2. Place the vacuum plate on the opposite end of the hose. Some hoses have a swivel cuff on one end. This cuff must be connected to the vacuum head.
3. Place the pole, vacuum head, and hose into the water. Try to remove as much air as possible from the hose by dunking. When the hose is full of water, place the vacuum plate over the skimmer basket.

### IV. BRUSHING & VACUUMING (CONTINUED)

4. The other skimmer line can be throttled in order to increase the suction of the vacuum; however, do not let the pump cavitate. Note: The vacuum head must remain underwater at all times when connected to the vacuum fitting.
5. When finished, reset all valves to their normal filtration position. Remove the vacuum plate from the skimmer. Turn off pump if necessary.

The hair and lint strainer and/or the filter may require cleaning during or after vacuuming the pool.

### V. WATER CHEMISTRY

Proper water chemistry is required for bather comfort and safety. The pool finishes and equipment can also be damaged by improper water balance. A test kit is provided for use in maintaining the balance of the pool water.

Refer to the manual in the test kit for more information.

Water Balance Recommendations		Sanitizer Recommendations
pH:	7.2 to 7.8	Maintain Chlorine level between 1 and 3 ppm. Do not use pool if level is above 5 ppm.
Calcium Hardness:	200-300 ppm	
Total Alkalinity:	80-120 ppm	



## VI. UNDERWATER LIGHTS

Underwater lights have incandescent bulbs, which like all bulbs, can last 10 minutes or 10 years. The light is water cooled and must not be operated without water in the pool.

The following are instructions for replacing the bulb in an underwater light fixture:

1. Turn off electrical power to underwater light fixture.
2. Loosen captive face ring screw and place light fixture assembly on deck. There is enough slack cord behind the light to allow the entire light fixture to reach the deck.
3. Remove the face ring and old bulb.
4. Replace new bulb of same type and wattage; use reflector bulb only.
5. Check lens gasket and replace if needed.
6. Replace face ring securely. Tighten screws evenly, taking care not to damage the housing.
7. Return light fixture assembly to niche and tighten captive face ring screw. The extra cord should be wrapped around the fixture.
8. Turn on the electrical power.

**Warning:** The light will generate a great amount of heat and should never be turned on out of the water. Always make sure the lights are connected to an operational Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI). If light does not operate with the new bulb, contact a licensed electrician for repair or replacement.

## VII. POOL FITTINGS

Most pool fittings (return inlets, main drains, etc.) have some type of cover or grating. These covers are attached by screws or other means. It is very important that these covers be installed and in good condition at all times.

**Warning:** Broken, loose, or missing covers on suction inlets can cause bather entrapment resulting in severe injury or death. Never allow bathers to enter a pool unless these covers are installed and fully operational.

## VIII. HYDROSTATIC RELIEF VALVE

Your pool may contain one or more hydrostatic relief valve(s). This is a check valve usually located in a main drain sump. This valve is to help prevent a high water table from damaging an empty pool. If the pool were empty, and the ground water built up around the pool, the pool could "float", or be pushed up by the pressure of the water. The hydrostatic relief valve will allow this water to enter the pool, which will help equalize the pressure.

Even with the pool full of water, hydrostatic valves may sometimes open. This usually occurs after a heavy rain. The water table rises and displaces the air in the crushed stone fill beneath the pool. This pressurized air can open the valve, causing the pool to leak. Sometimes the valve will reset automatically, but a diver is usually required to clean and reset the valve.

## IX. WINTERIZATION

- During the winter months, the water in the pool will freeze. Care must be taken to help prevent the freezing water from damaging the pool and pool equipment. **Warning: Do not drain the pool during the winter, as damage to the pool and pool piping could result.**
- An overflow is installed on the pool just beneath the pool deck. This overflow must be open during the winter to prevent the water level from rising due to rain and snow. When water freezes, it will press upward. If the water level is too high, this upward pressure can damage the deck, tile, and skimmers.
- Be sure the water chemistry is in balance before winterizing the pool. Add algaecide and shock the pool as described in the test kit booklet. Circulate the water for at least six hours after the addition of chemicals before winterizing the pool equipment.
- Give the pool a final cleaning. Brush, vacuum, and clean the waterline tile.
- Backwash the filter thoroughly.
- Turn off the pump. Open all suction valves. Remove the vacuum plug from the pool vacuum fitting. Place the handle on the multi-port valve in between two positions.
- Remove the drain plugs on the pool pump, filter, and heater. Refer to the equipment manuals for detailed instructions. Note that most pumps have two (2) drain plugs, one for the pump and one for the hair and lint strainer.
- Make sure that the pump cannot be turned on while it is winterized. Turning off the breaker is recommended.
- Install a Gizzmo™ into the skimmer. These are plastic cylinders which help limit any damage caused by the freezing water. The skimmer basket can be placed upside down over the Gizzmo™, or stored elsewhere.
- If you have a safety mesh pool cover, install it now. Covers will reduce the amount of debris that enters the pool during the winter months.
- Monitor the pool regularly during the off-season. If the water level gets too high, lower it using a submersible pump, and clear the blockage in the overflow. If the water level begins to drop, immediately determine the cause of the problem, and have it corrected. Common areas where water is lost are through expansion joints, cracks, or hydrostatic relief valves. A polysulfide sealant can be installed in cracks or expansion joints, and the relief valve can be replaced or cleaned and reset.

## K. Floral Care Guide

What to Expect Throughout Each Season	Pg. 49
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Fertilization	Pg. 50
Deer Control	Pg. 50
Your Floral Display by Season	Pg. 50

## FLORAL CARE GUIDE

Add year-round interest to your landscape and home with our unique four season floral rotations! We design and install annual flowers in window boxes, containers, and bedding areas for each season of the year. Please take a moment to learn a little more about what you can expect during each season and how to care for your floral displays. Remember, unless you are signed up for one of our maintenance packages, the post-installation care is 100% your responsibility.

### I. WHAT TO EXPECT THROUGHOUT EACH SEASON

It is important to keep in mind that our seasonal displays include annual plants. While they are stunning during their given time of year, they will die at the end of the season in which they are planted. We use the healthiest and most beautiful plant material available. Your floral displays will need a little help throughout the season to stay beautiful and flourish. Depending on your planting style, irrigation system, and other various factors, the amount of work required from you will vary.

### II. HOW TO WATER

- Ensure that the top 1" of the soil media in the container is moist.
- When watering your plantings by hand, give each container a nice long soak of water (30-45 seconds each). If they have become very dry, they will drain quickly when first watered. Water them and let the water thoroughly soak into the soil. You may find it best to water each container once and make a second or third round until the containers don't drain as quickly.
- Remember, water running from the bottom of the pot means one of two things:
  - The soil media is too wet and the water is flooding through.
  - The soil media is too dry and the water is running through the media and not being absorbed.

### III. IRRIGATION

If you have drip or micro-irrigation there are some important things to consider:

- If your drip irrigation is connected to a larger system, the drip will not run if the system is not started.
- Most irrigation systems are not started until mid-April, so you may need to hand water your spring displays.
- Most irrigation systems are winterized or deactivated in early October so you may need to hand water your fall displays.
- If your drip system is connected to a hose spigot timer, you may consider activating once the weather warms up. We typically do NOT recommend activating irrigation prior to April 15th.
- Program your drip timer to run 2-3 times per day for small intervals (2-4 mins). This ensures the top 1" of the soil media stays wet. If your containers receive more/less sun, this may need to be adjusted. The times above are just a guide and recommended starting point. New installations may require some tweaking to ensure it is properly set up.
- Winterize your timer by disconnecting the timer and storing inside and disconnecting hoses from the spigot. We recommend winterizing by November.



Orbit timer.

### IV. FERTILIZATION

- We will fertilize all flowers at installation.
- We recommend adding liquid fertilizer such as Miracle-Grow Flower Food every 2-3 weeks to summer displays.
- Fertilization is not recommended for fall or winter floral rotations.

### V. DEER CONTROL

- If you are in an area that is highly populated by deer, we recommend applying a deer repellent. These are available as a spray or a granular and we are happy to help you choose what is right for you. This should be done every two weeks or after a heavy rain.



Liquid Fence deer repellent.

### VI. YOUR FLORAL DISPLAY BY SEASON

#### SPRING:

- Duration: March - May
- What to Expect:

This season is short and the weather is cool, so don't expect your plants to grow much at all. They will be full and dense when planted. As the weather starts to consistently warm up, the flowers will fade. We work to time the floral rotation



to the next season prior to the flowers fading significantly. If you do not receive our maintenance service or a summer floral display, you will be responsible for removing the spring flowers.

#### SUMMER:

- Duration: May - September/October
- What to Expect:

This is the longest season that typically yields the most enjoyment. It is also the season with the most planting options. Summer flowers are planted full, but smaller because they will fill out during the season. Some plants will require deadheading for the fullest look. While it is not required, it will encourage more flowering and it will help your flowers look better. While most summer annuals thrive in the dry heat of summer, you may see some decline in their appearance if there are extended periods of dry and hot days. Pay extra attention to water at this time, but be careful not to over water. The brilliance of summer floral tends to peak around July. After late August, you will begin to notice the flowers fading. We work to time the floral rotation to the next season prior to the flowers fading significantly. If you do not receive our maintenance service or a fall floral display, you will be responsible for removing the summer flowers.



#### FALL:

- Duration: September/October - late November
- What to Expect:

You will see very little growth from these flowers due to temperature and the type of plant installed. For this reason, we use full plants and install them close together to give a complete look. We typically try to install plants that have not yet started blooming so you get the enjoyment of the full bloom cycle. These flowers will require water on hot days and some plants such as cabbage and mums may require daily water. We work to time the floral rotation to the next season prior to the flowers fading significantly. If you do not receive our maintenance service or a winter floral display, you will be responsible for removing the fall flowers.



#### WINTER:

- Duration: Late November - early January/mid March
- What to Expect:

Our winter displays do not grow at all. They consist primarily of cut greenery and small shrubs like boxwood. You can extend the life of the winter plantings by keeping the soil media moist on days the temperatures are above 45 degrees. The life span of these plantings vary greatly based on the climate that particular season. It is safe to expect 30 days of them looking great. If the winter is cold, they will last longer. If you do not receive our maintenance service you will be responsible for removing the winter floral display.





# SOUTHERN LANDSCAPE GROUP WARRANTY

**WARRANTY:** All warranties are null and void if contractor does not receive payment as outlined in this agreement. Payments made after the due date will void your warranty.

## Hardscape Material Warranty

- a. Hardscape Material Warranties. All hardscape material warranties (the material itself) shall be limited solely to the warranty provided by the material manufacturer. This includes, but is not limited to water feature pumps, appliances, lighting timers and fixtures, pavers, granite countertops, fixtures, composite decking boards, railings, and other specialty items. SLG warrants that hardscape materials used in this contract will be free from defects at the time of installation. Natural stone does not carry a warranty. The labor to replace hardscape materials shall be covered for the one year.
- b. Hardscape Craftsmanship Warranties: SLG warrants that masonry/hardscape craftsmanship will be free of defects for a period of five (5) years from the date of substantial completion provided the installation was used as was intended when the Contract was designed, and was not misused. It does not cover chipping, spalling, or settlement due to drainage or water issues. Warranty includes, but is not limited to loose paving or veneer stone, deteriorating grout, settling or sagging of patios, pavers, or walls, leaning of walls. Please note that grout lines will experience hairline cracks and are not included in this warranty due to the nature of the material. Furthermore, labor to repair/replace hardscape materials that are not covered by the material manufacturer will be the responsibility of the owner.
- c. The warrantee for all other non-plant hardscape items unless otherwise stated in this contract is limited to one (1) year.
- d. Contractor's warranty excludes, and contractor is not liable for any damage or defect caused by abuse, modifications not executed by contractor, improper or insufficient maintenance, improper operation, or normal wear and tear under normal usage. Minor settling of dry laid brick and flagstone is considered normal. Freeze and thaw cycles also cause settling or heaving and is considered normal. As stone is a natural product, variances of color, blemishes, and/or the appearance of efflorescence on brick or flagstone is not considered a defect in product or workmanship and cannot be considered for replacement under warranty. Certain lumber products naturally tend to split and bow with natural drying and are not considered to be defective and cannot be considered for replacement under warranty. Contractor shall not be responsible for settling due to conditions beyond our control such as excessive rainfall, subsurface water, poor drainage conditions, settling of land, or erosion of materials. Power washing, repointing of joints or any other changes by others to the work installed by the contractor will void all warranties.
- e. Changes in grades above or below a wall by others after the contractor's work is complete can cause failure, due to water flow changes. This contractor will insure proper drainage and a stable wall upon completion. Any change in grade after work is complete forfeits contractor's responsibility.
- f. Any repairs/replacements made to any installation after expiration of the warranty will be made at owner/agent's expense. Any repairs made to any installation by any party other than the contractor voids any warranties offered by the contractor.
- g. We make NO GUARANTEE on the color of the concrete pavers and wall block. Colors appear brighter in the brochures, and colors will fade over time. Once the color and pattern are determined and the work has begun, there will be no changes without a written change order (regardless of cost/no cost). Colors also may be different from batch to batch of the same material color.
- h. Drainage Systems: Due to the nature of the work, performance of drainage systems are not guaranteed to be deemed as sufficient during periods of heavy or extended rainfall. It may be expected that additional work may be necessary to resolve previously undetected issues at an additional cost to the owner. This extra work would be billed for under separate contract and under no circumstances should be considered warranty work.

- i. There are no other warranties made by the contractor, whether expressed or implied, other than specifically in the contract herein. Furthermore, the owner expressly waives any implied warranties or any of the materials delivered by the contractor and further specifically agrees that the contractor shall not be responsible for any action or claim for damages allegedly arising out of any such hidden defects and/or under state law of rehabilitating vices and/or defects.
- j. Contractor's Hardscape Material Warranty shall be void if the owner terminates the contract.

## Plant Material Warranty

- k. The warranty for plant materials under this contract shall be a period of one (1) year providing the account has been paid in full per all terms of this contract. Trees, shrubs, and woody vines are covered under the Plant Material Warranty.
- l. Items NOT covered under the Plant Material Warranty are: Annuals, perennials, seed, ground covers, sod, bulbs, plants installed in boxes or planters, plants furnished by others but planted by us, transplanted plants, and plants that do not receive adequate watering or are over-watered.
- m. It is the owner's/agent's responsibility to properly water all lawns and plant material after construction is complete. The contractor will also properly water these materials during the construction period.
- n. Any plant material that is 50% or more dead shall be considered dead.
- o. Replacement plants shall be of the same size and species as the original plantings with preference given to same size/species. One replacement for each plant that dies will be made. If that particular plant is not available, the contractor will replace with a similar variety that fits within the planting design. The warranty only covers one replacement and does NOT restart when a plant is replaced.
- p. Replacements shall be made once in the spring or once in the fall unless the contractor agrees to other dates. If your warranty comes due November through March, we will inspect at the beginning of the spring following when the warranty expires. This allows plants to re-emerge from dormancy. Timing of your replacements will vary due to weather and plant availability.
- q. We will not be responsible for plants which die due to conditions beyond our control, such as floods, insufficient or excessive water, hail, sleet, wind, frost, drought, disease or damage caused by insects, children, deer, rabbits, groundhogs or other plant eating animals, or acts of nature. The guarantee above will not apply where plants die because of chemicals, vandalism, fire, strikes, riots, or other similar commotion or by any other contingency or cause beyond the landscape contractor's control. Most plant loss may be attributable to improper watering. We do not guarantee plants that have died because of improper maintenance.
- r. Contractor's Plant Material Warranty shall be void if the owner terminates the contract or fails to properly water.

NOTES





**SOUTHERN**  
**LANDSCAPE GROUP, INC.**

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