

As we have entered the late fall part of the year there are a few landscape check off items necessary to have done in order to protect your landscape investment:

1. Turn the irrigation timer off. It is very damaging to have the lawns watering when it freezes outside, especially if it is being walked on or driven on.
2. Winterize your irrigation system. Sprinkler winterization is a necessity in order to protect your system from winter damage. Winterizing is the process of forcing compressed air into the sprinkler system and then cycling through each control valve until the water has been removed from the sprinkler/irrigation system. This should be done before the first freeze. Be sure the filter is empty as well after the blow out. If you want to play on the side of caution, place a freeze blanket over the valves and gate valves in the boxes.
3. Winterize plants in the yard. Bring all potted freeze sensitive plants inside and continue to water them. Purchase freeze blankets for the sensitive plants if it's feasible. Winterizing newly-planted perennials requires protecting plant crowns with a deeper layer of mulch after the ground freezes. You may want to create a framework around plants using hardware cloth, empty used plant buckets, or tomato cages that you stuff with leaves or straw to protect plant crowns.
4. If there are long periods of time without rain, periodically water the newly planted plants, especially the hydrangeas, viburnum, lilac etc. Be sure to water at a time when frost is not forecasted.
5. Take the opportunity to remove rock from around the bottom of the tree trunks (the area of the root collar), and place a layer of mulch or leaves to preserve moisture and prevent hard root frost. If the trees are in the lawn areas, expand the tree well by leaving the leaves around the tree ring area. Avoid piling excessive amount of leaves against the tree trunk.

I hope you finds these basic tips helpful. Happy winter.