

December 2008

- Spread wood ashes evenly on vegetable garden. Use no more than 1.5 lb/100 sq ft/year. Do not use if the soil pH is greater than 7.0 or if potassium levels are excessive.
- Use dormant sprays of lime sulfur or copper fungicide on fruit trees and roses for general disease control.
- *Central/eastern Oregon:* Water your plants every 6 to 8 weeks when temperatures are above freezing with a deep soaking to prevent drying out.
- *Western Oregon:* Make sure that landscape plants in protected sites receive water regularly during the winter.
- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Do not treat unless a problem is identified.
- Yard sanitation: rake leaves, cut and remove withered stalks of perennial flowers, mulch flower beds, hoe or pull winter weeds.
- Check for rodent damage around bases of trees and large shrubs.
- *Mid-December in western Oregon:* Spray peach trees with lime sulfur or approved fungicides to protect against peach leaf curl. Choose resistant varieties if possible.
- *Western Oregon:* Still time to plant spring-flowering bulbs such as tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, crocuses. Don't delay.
- Avoid mounding mulching materials around the bases of trees and shrubs. The mulch might provide cover for rodents.
- During heavy rains, watch for drainage problems in the yard. Tiling, ditching, and French drains are possible solutions.
- Monitor houseplants for adequate water, fertilizer, humidity. Water and fertilizer requirements generally are less in winter.
- Check stored flower bulbs, fresh vegetables, fruits for rot and fungus problems. Discard any showing signs of rot.
- Make holiday decorations from trees and shrubs in the yard.
- Monitor spruce trees for spruce aphids. Treat if present in large numbers. Read and follow pesticide label directions.
- Tie limbs of columnar evergreens to prevent snow or ice breakage.
- If the lawn is frozen, stay off it.
- Use paper tree wraps on lower trunks of newly planted fruit and nut trees to avoid sun damage.
- Turn the compost pile.
- *Western Oregon:* Good time of year to plant trees, landscape shrubs.