

What lurks beneath the snow pile? Snow Mold!

Just when most of us thought we would not see our turf until June, we had a brief January thaw, and parts of yards were visible once again. But some of us did not care for what we saw - gray snow mold. Gray snow mold produces large patches that are visible as the snow begins to melt. The turf is matted and the grass appears scalded. At the edges of the patch, you will find gray mold growth.



Gray snow mold

It has been some time since environmental conditions came together to encourage the growth of snow mold. (We last wrote about it in March 2005.) First of all, the ground never froze before the snow came. Second, we received large quantities of insulating snow which kept ground level temperatures right around freezing - perfect growing conditions for the mold.

The good news is that, while the disease is unsightly, it is not fatal. While the turf may green up a little more slowly, it *will* green up without adding anything to our usual applications. What you should do to help the drying process is lightly rake up the matted down areas of turf with a leaf rake. Do this before there is a lot of traffic on the yard and before the first spring applications of fertilizer. Resist the urge to rush out there so early that you make matters worse by raking while the yard is still too wet. Remember: rake lightly. We want to lift the matted grass, not rip it out.

As for prevention, the best thing a homeowner can do is make sure the grass is not left too long at the end of the growing season. It is one of two times we think you can get away with mowing short, the other time being at the beginning of the year to pick up debris.

Sustainable landscapes give back



The Zero Net Energy Test Home, also known as ZNETH, is a home being constructed near the UNO campus by students in the Peter Kiewit Institute at UNO. As the name implies, the home will generate as much energy as it uses and even sell back the excess energy it generates. The house also manages all of the rain that falls on the property through the use of rain gardens, cisterns and native plantings.



Andy Szatko, landscape designer at CM's, worked with Avery Schwer, UNO, to make certain that the landscape is a sustainable one. This was accomplished by ensuring that all the rain that falls on the site is managed on site. When rain hits our roofs, driveways and yards, most of that water runs off down the curb. By managing water run off onsite with rain gardens, we keep moisture in the ground where the plants can use it instead of having to lug a hose out to water them. Two 300-gallon tanks were installed below ground and collect the water coming out of the front downspouts. This water will be used to irrigate during droughts, clean off hard surfaces, and potentially fill a future water feature. The plants used for the landscape are native or adapted plant materials that have deep roots to help water landing on the surface infiltrate down into the soil. With those deep roots, they are less susceptible to drought conditions. This project demonstrates how a sustainable landscape isn't just a feature to consider, but rather, a standard by which to design.



Reminders

1. Schedule spring clean ups and deep-root feeding for trees and shrubs.
2. Prune ornamental grasses and perennials.
3. Take advantage of our winter specials on bed maintenance, spring remulch and tree pruning. See page 2 for information.

Winter specials at CM's

Bed Maintenance

- **20% discount*** on landscape bed maintenance!
- Monthly maintenance, April-November
- Three tiers of service range from basic weed control to shrub pruning; pay for what you need.

See our December newsletter or call the office for more information.

*Discount applies to new contracts only.

Spring Remulch

- **20% discount*** on spring remulch!
- Fully organic providing needed nutrients as it breaks down
- Inhibit weed growth, retain moisture
- Refresh landscape beds

Spring clean-ups and remulch projects kick off our season. Call today to ensure your spot on the schedule.

*Discount applies to new contracts only.

Tree Pruning and Removal

- **15% discount** on winter tree pruning and removal!
- Your 100% satisfaction is guaranteed.
- This offer is valid for all new work scheduled before March 31, 2010.

Hurry! The schedule is filling up! Call today to schedule an arborist's evaluation!

News from the arborist



Recent ice and snow storms have created tree damage throughout the area. Now is a great time to remove the damage before the next storm brings it down creating property damage!

Winter is a great time to prune trees. Arborists are readily available to inspect and care for your trees so there's little to no waiting for an appointment. The lack of leaves creates unobstructed views of problems that might otherwise be hidden by foliage. Tree pathogens are dormant minimizing the risk of spreading infectious diseases. Frozen soil supports heavy equipment such as bucket trucks with little to no damage, saving time and your money. Best of all, there's the winter money-saving special: a 15% discount!

We look forward to visiting with you about your tree and shrub concerns and questions. Call or email us today!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Thanks to all who prepaid and returned their 2010 contracts prior to January 1! Bill & Betty Blake, John & Lynn Hamill and Lee & Terri Polikov have each won a free tree to be planted later this year.



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