

FERTILIZING GUIDELINES

General Application Rules

Most fertilizers should begin the application process as soon as new growth appears in the spring. Fertilizers should be applied according to the label directions and at the recommended intervals. An all purpose fertilizer may be applied to landscaping beds in order to fertilize all plants at once. Follow the directions listed on the fertilizer's label for application and frequency. Fertilizers should stop being applied at least 6 weeks before plants begin to show fall color. In central Iowa, this is typically the first week in September.

Annuals

Fertilizing may begin for annuals on the first day they are planted. First, apply a root starter when the initial planting occurs. This will help your annuals to become established and to encourage faster growth. Second, incorporate a slow release fertilizer into the soil at the time of planting to encourage growth and blooms. Annuals may then be fertilized weekly with a general-purpose fertilizer, label directions should be followed.

Perennials & Grasses

Perennials and grasses may be fertilized with a liquid fertilizer starting 1 month after planting. They should be fertilized with a granular slow release in the spring after new growth appears and repeat this at the recommend intervals for the fertilizer used. If you don't want to use a slow release granular fertilizer then a liquid fertilizer may be used every 2 to 4 weeks.

Shrubs

Fertilizer should not be applied for the first year that shrubs are planted. Non-acid loving shrubs may be fertilized with a granular slow release in the spring once new growth appears and repeat at the recommended intervals for the fertilizer used. If you do not want to use a slow release granular fertilizer, then a liquid fertilizer may be used every 2-4 weeks. Evergreens and acid loving shrubs such as azaleas, rhododendrons, hydrangeas, and boxwoods prefer acidic soils. To obtain acidic soils it is recommended that an acid based fertilizer such as Miracid be used to fertilize these plants once a month during the growing season.

Trees

Fertilizer should not be applied to trees for the first year of planting. To encourage quick growth on younger trees (that are over one year old) fertilizer tree spikes may be pounded in around the drip line of the tree in the late fall or early spring. Follow label directions for the amount of spikes to use for the size of tree you have. Evergreens trees grow well in acidic soil so it is recommended to use an acid based fertilizer such as evergreen spikes or a liquid application such as Miracid. If evergreen spikes are used pound them into the ground in the late fall or early spring. If Miracid is used follow the label directions. Large established trees do not need fertilizing unless issues with yellowing foliage emerge. If yellow foliage appears please contact us for advice on how to treat your specific tree.

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