

THE **SUNRISE** VIEW

Lawn / Landscaping Services, Inc.
Serving Northern Virginians since 1986

From the President



When you get thirsty, you go and get a drink of water. Plants don't have that ability, so they

must conserve water by slowing their transpiration. However, they can only do this for so long. It also depends on their root mass, protection from the direct sun, etc. We're coming off one of the driest springs on record at Dulles. Therefore, we need to be more cognizant of the actual amount of moisture our plants are getting, and supplement that moisture with irrigation from either a system or by normal watering.

If you're not quite sure if your plants are getting enough water, start by looking at their appearance. Do they look wilted or droopy? Dig around in the dirt at the base of the plant, or better yet, purchase an inexpensive water meter to see how wet or dry the soil really is. Make sure you provide a long, deep watering once a week versus several light waterings which don't quite do the job. A lot of water goes a long way!

Sincerely,

Joe Markell

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Ever Want to Make a Grand Entrance?

Gardeners and non-gardeners alike enjoy having the entryway to their home extend a warm and friendly welcome to every visitor. Design of the landscaping leading to the front door influences how inviting your home appears to guests, neighbors and even the mailman.

Making the approach to the front door an outdoor extension of the front hall or foyer doesn't have to be time consuming or expensive. The following hints are offered to help you make your front walk say "welcome."

- Frame the walkway to help create the feeling of an outdoor hallway. Small trees with branches that create the feeling of a roof or arbor help to achieve this. A low fence or hedge lining the walk on the street side and leading to the door creates a kind of low wall and is another way to create this entry-hall effect.
- Create a sense of spaciousness by widening your walkway. It should be at least 44" to 48" wide to accommodate two people walking side-by-side.
- Use color and variety. By combining complementary shrubs, ground covers, bulbs and flowers, you can create an entry that changes with and reflects the seasons.
- Hanging baskets and large clay or ceramic pots are easy to maintain and can add visual highlights and color to your design.
- Consider creating a focal point of interest with a "feature." This can be something as simple as a birdbath or bench or as elaborate as a fountain.
- The entry walk should be well-lit. Consider low-level, low-voltage systems in your design.
- Plan for the eventual, mature size of the plants you're considering. Avoid those that will require severe and frequent pruning as they grow.

Before beginning, take note of homes with entries you like. Plan your design carefully, and it will give you and your visitors pleasure for years to come.



Before



After



You Really Are What You Eat!

Well, if you're a ladybug, that is. Have you ever wondered why ladybugs come in different colors? It has to do with their diet. Ladybugs that feed mainly on aphids are red in color. But if they eat a more pollen-heavy diet, they'll be orange or yellow.

And if you look closely at different ladybugs, you'll see that some have more spots on their wing covers than others. The number of spots they have is dictated by the air temperature while they're developing.

Ladybugs are beneficial to your landscape plants because they feed on soft-bodied insect pests such as aphids and scales. By acting as natural pest controls, they can help us to cut down on insecticide use.



Great Blooms Can Be as Simple as This!

So your flowers are planted and the fresh mulch looks great, but what now? How do you get your plants bushy and full of blooms?

Watering too much or too little is one of the most common causes of poor flower performance. Here are a few tips for handling the hose:

- Annuals have shallow roots and need to be watered often - every day or two if it hasn't rained.
- Established perennials have much deeper roots and need less water. Let the soil dry between waterings.
- Some kinds of flowers don't like being watered on their flower heads or leaves. Be sure to check this out ahead of time.

Another key to success is fertilizer. It takes a lot of energy to produce those non-stop blooms all season, and fertilizing is just what the doctor ordered. Here are some of the "secret" techniques used by successful flower growers:

- Fertilize perennials when they start blooming.
- Annuals appreciate fertilization when they're establishing and again in mid-season.
- Yellowing leaves are often a sign that fertilizer is needed.
- It's a good idea to water in well within a few hours of application (unless using liquid foliar fertilizers).



Attack of the Japanese Beetles

There's no denying the damage that Japanese beetle larvae (grubs) can do to a lawn. But what about Japanese beetles in their adult form?

After emerging from lawns in late June and July, Japanese beetles may feed on any number of plants in your landscape. They have a tendency to cluster in big groups on some plants more than others, and they can completely skeletonize a plant in no time. Studies show that Japanese beetles cluster due to sex pheromones they release that attract other beetles.



An easy way to prevent major feeding damage is to remove the first few beetles you see in your landscape by hand - don't worry, they won't bite!

This will prevent them from releasing pheromones and attracting more beetles, and will reduce feeding damage considerably. Japanese beetle traps are also available, but be careful about placement since they can actually attract more beetles to your landscape.

Make a Deep Impression: Water Right This Summer

Your lawn (and landscape plants) need water in the root zone, not just at the surface. Nobody wants to have to water every day, and you shouldn't. How long it takes you to water correctly is determined by what kind of soil you have and how long it takes to get your soil type properly saturated.

Your soil can be classified as either: clay (dense soil with few air spaces and very small, tightly packed soil particles); loam (an open mix with adequate air space for water and nutrients to move); or sandy (very loose and open with little water-holding ability). The type of soil makes a big difference in how often (and how long) you should water.

The 6" Rule

Your soil dries out from the top down, or from the surface inward. When you water, it's important to soak the soil to a depth of at least 6" and to let the surface dry out between waterings. This practice encourages deeper rooting of all plants.

Clay soils absorb water very slowly, because there are only tiny spaces for water to move between the soil particles. It takes a lot longer to soak a heavy clay soil to the 6" depth, but once soaked, the clay soils hold the water much better and need fewer waterings.

Loam might be the ideal soil for turfgrass. It's usually dark, has organic material and provides good drainage and air movement for turfgrass roots.

Sandy soils are so open and loose that they can usually absorb water as fast as you can put it on. However, they dry out much faster too.

To test how long it takes to soak your lawn 6" deep, use a spade or a soil probe after watering to see just how deep you've gone. By watering deeply, you'll have a healthier, more drought-resistant lawn...and your watering will always make a very deep impression!



Let There Be Water!

Whether they're used as focal points or simple accents, water features are a great way to add interest, beauty and tranquility to your landscape. Ornamental pools can embellish your garden with a wide variety of fish, foliage and flowers, while the sounds of moving water from a fountain or waterfall can help to create a more relaxed and welcoming atmosphere.

Deciding on a Purpose

Your water feature can be simple or complex depending on your needs and interests. For example, if you're interested in an ornamental pool, do you want it to reflect surrounding plants, attract birds, or serve as a home for water plants and fish? Or, would you like a combination of all of these? And if you'll be including a fountain or waterfall, how strong do you want the flow of water to be? Keep in mind that fountains work well in formal pools, but may look out of place in informal pools such as water gardens. In water gardens, a gentle waterfall usually works best.

Choosing a Location

Ideally, your water feature will be visible from inside and out. If plants will be incorporated, you should choose a location that gets from four to six hours of sunlight per day.

Surrounding trees may be a concern if they drop excessive leaves or their leaves are hazardous to fish. For obvious reasons, it makes sense to choose a location that has easy access to drainage, a water source, and electricity (in case you'll be using a pump and lights).

In most cases, a water feature will require less maintenance than you might imagine, and the relaxing ambiance it adds to your landscape will be well worth the effort. We'd love to help with your water journey. Give us a call anytime to talk about your project.





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Stop Mosquitoes at the Source!

Mosquitoes are not only annoying but dangerous too, since just one bite can transmit West Nile virus and other diseases. Mosquito repellents are helpful, but eliminating their breeding sites on your property is an even better way to protect yourself and your family from these pests.

Removing the Threat

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water, so it's a good idea to check around your house periodically for spots where they might be breeding. These spots may include flower pots, pet food and water bowls, swimming pool covers, buckets, barrels and cans. You should remove any non-essential items from your landscape that allow water to collect and stand, and bird baths should be changed once or twice per week. You should also check for any clogged rain gutters and clean them out if necessary.

Don't let mosquitoes ruin your summer...take the bite out of these pests by taking action now!



8 Simple Reasons for Maintaining a Healthy Lawn

A well-maintained lawn can help to provide a healthier, more pleasant environment for you, your family and your community. Here are some interesting facts about lawns that you may not be aware of:

- A 50' x 50' lawn produces enough daily oxygen for a family of four.
- Grass acts as a natural air conditioner by absorbing the sun's heat.
- Grass helps to clean the air, absorbing pollutants and returning pure oxygen in exchange.
- A thick, healthy lawn naturally deters allergen-causing weed pollen.
- Biting and stinging insects are found less often in lawns that are free of blooming weeds.
- Noise is reduced in areas where lawns are present (soft-surfaced landscapes absorb sound, while hard surfaces reflect it).
- Thick turf filters surface water before it returns to ground water supplies.
- Grass works as a natural barrier to soil erosion caused by wind and water.

With over 20 years of experience maintaining beautiful landscapes throughout Northern Virginia, Sunrise has learned what it takes to produce the best results possible. Take advantage of our knowledge and save yourself a little time and sweat this summer. Call us today! (703) 759-0529