

It's Our Environment
Show Your Care 
THE ULTIMATE 'GREEN' THUMB

Gardening and looking after our properties can be a great source of pride, relaxation, and exercise. It's rewarding to grow your own vegetables, fruits, or herbs, and a pleasure to nurture flowers, trees, shrubs, and a healthy lawn.

By adopting "green" lawn and garden practices, we're not only taking care of our properties ... we're taking care of our environment.

Doing things in an environmentally-friendly way can be very simple and often saves money. Some activities take a little time, but time is one of the most important things we can contribute in protecting and enhancing our environment.

Here are a few things to keep in mind as you plant and tend to your lawn and garden:

Taking Advantage of our Natural Surroundings

- Use care-free groundcover that doesn't need cutting, like moss or woody plantings, wildflowers, or shrubs.
- Plant one or more trees - they filter air pollution, contribute oxygen to the air, secure soil from erosion, shelter birds, help control the "greenhouse effect", (climatic change) and act as air conditioners, keeping areas shaded and cool.
- Compost is a great soil conditioner for your lawn and garden. For a free copy of our compost guidebook, [Backyard Magic](#), call us at the number listed on the reverse side of this info sheet.
- Use mulches of straw, lawn clippings, wood chips or sawdust to reduce weed growth, and maintain cooler temperatures in your garden. Leave short grass clippings on the lawn as a natural fertilizer.

Conserving Water ... Every Drop Counts

- Collect rainwater for lawn and garden watering.
- Water lawn and plants in the morning or at the coolest time of the day to prevent evaporation and sunburning of grass and leaves.
- Hand-water plants to avoid waste and to direct flow to plant roots where it's needed. If you use a hose, buy one made from recycled rubber or plastic. It will last longer if it's stored out of the sun and not dragged across rough surfaces.
- Mulching helps retain moisture in the soil, and crowds out weeds. Use leaves, grass clippings, seaweed, compost, or sawdust.
- Use a broom to sweep the driveway or sidewalk instead of hosing it down.

Handling our “Natural Enemies”

Natural solutions for common pests:

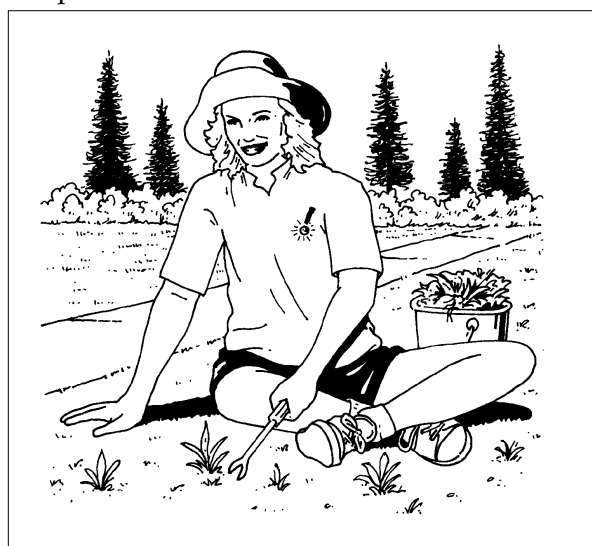
- Aphids** - Ladybugs and warblers eat thousands of aphids annually. To get the ones they miss, spray plants with soap (pH balanced detergent for example) and water.
- Slugs** - To repel slugs, buy powdered ginger in bulk and spread it around the base of plants. To remove slugs let them gather under a board, then collect them in the morning and dunk them in soapy or salty water. Or try placing a shallow pan of vinegar or beer in your garden overnight - they'll drown a happy death by morning.
- Cutworms** - To protect the roots of newly planted peppers and other green vegetables, make collars from waxed cardboard, foil, or rings from tin cans or small plastic containers and push them into the soil about 5 mm deep .
- Tent Caterpillars** - At the first sighting, pull nest off trees and dunk in water. To prevent developed caterpillars from climbing trees and destroying the leaves, wrap masking tape around the base of the tree at night, and cover the tape with petroleum jelly. The caterpillars will gather at the base of the tree and can be collected and disposed of. Avoid using foil cuffs around trees - they cause the bark to rot and may damage the tree.
- Other chewing insects** -An all-purpose spray that works on many chewing insects is made by pureeing 3 cloves of garlic, 1 large onion, 1 tbsp cayenne pepper with 1 litre of water. Dilute 1:4 with water and spray on plant leaves and stems.
- Red Spider Mites** - Mix 4 tbsp dishwashing liquid in 4 litres of water. Spray plants weekly until mites disappear.
- Ants** - Although ants can be abundant around peonies and other plants, they are only pests when they come into the house. To prevent this from happening, make a purée of orange peel and water and sprinkle on ant hills. Placing cucumber peels on an ant route will also stop these picnic pests.

Other possibilities:

- Hang a birdhouse near your garden. Birds, especially purple martins, love to eat insects.
- Try 'companion planting', or growing certain plants in with your vegetables and flowers. Marigolds, daisies, nasturtium, yarrow, garlic and mint, are just a few of the plants which will repel many insects.

Natural solutions for neighbourhood pests and pets

- Rabbits, groundhogs, and raccoons will not battle with a three foot high wire mesh fence around your garden.
- To keep cats and dogs out of the garden, sprinkle cayenne pepper or scatter lemon, grapefruit and orange peels near plants.



Dig up weeds by hand, before they seed.

Conserving Energy ... Use Human Power

- Where possible, use hand-operated tools like manual tillers, push mowers, and hedge trimmers, instead of power tools.
- Set blades high and keep them sharpened, especially on electric and gas-powered mowers. This means mowing less often, and preventing the grass from becoming weak.
- If using a gas-powered mower, avoid filling the gas tank or changing the oil in places where either substance will run off onto the soil or grass.

Show You Care!

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