

***By David Lott***

***UNL Extension Horticulturist***

Cooler weather is starting to set in now! As we are enjoying this cool weather, fall foliage, bright chrysanthemums and all the pumpkins, we need to think about winterizing yards and landscapes.

Here are a few chores to be working on or at least be thinking about!

- Dig up and store tender bulb plants such as cannas, caladium and dahlias before the first frost.

These bulbs will not survive in the ground over the winter. They need to be stored in a dry cool place such as a basement, an insulated tool shed or garage.

- Disconnect and drain all garden hoses so the water doesn't freeze up in the hose.

- Drain lawn sprinkler systems and winterize the system to avoid winter damage.

- Drain water out of garden fountains. Remove the pump and store it in a safe place for the winter.

If the fountain can be moved into a shed or garage, this will help reduce the chance of freezing water being trapped in the fountain bowls and pools.

If the fountain cannot be moved, cover it with a fountain cover bag or a tarp.

- Plant hardy fall bulbs such as tulips, daffodils, hyacinths and crocus.
- Fertilize existing bulb beds for good bloom quality next spring!
- Remove dead garden debris out of the garden. Destroy diseased or blighted plant material.

Healthy plant material can be added to a compost pile.

- Remove leaves off the yard. Leaves can be added to compost piles or tilled into garden beds.
- Clean leaves and debris out of house gutters to avoid plugged gutters that could freeze up.
- Cut back and winterize rose bushes by Thanksgiving.
- Apply a layer of mulch around perennial landscape plants to help insulate them for the winter.
- Clean out garden pond pumps so they are ready for next year.

If you have fish in the pond, consider installing a water heater to keep the fish alive over the winter.

- Remove shallow garden pond plants to a warm location to survive the winter. Deep water garden plants such as water lilies can be set in the deepest part of the pond.
- Put away yard furniture in a safe storage place to avoid cracking and winter damage.

Clean all debris and soil from garden tools.

A broken piece of brick seems to do a good job of scouring of debris and soil away. Store garden tools to avoid winter damage and rusting.

This is a very short list of potential chores to take care of in the garden or the yard.

If you have any questions about these winterizing tips, please send an e-mail to [dlott2@unl.edu](mailto:dlott2@unl.edu), by calling (308) 696-6781, or by contact your local University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Office. Have a great week!