



WINTER PROTECTION FOR YOUR

TREES & SHRUBS

Winter can typically be a trying time for our plant material. This fall and winter season has proven to be a confusing one as well. Usually by this time of year, our trees and shrubs have all gone into dormancy which protects them from temperature fluctuations during the winter months and reduces winter damage to buds and other plant parts. Since this fall has been unseasonably warm, some of our plant material will be more at risk for winter damage. I have noticed select Cherry varieties blooming in December (which seems wonderful to us now but do not expect a spring bloom out of these trees). I have also seen buds on Hydrangeas and Lilacs that have not yet hardened off completely. You can expect to see increased winter damage on these shrub varieties as well. Winter hardiness is primarily based on water relations within the plant, with that being said, there are a few things that we can do to mitigate water loss during these cold and windy months.

- Burlapping of shrubs in exposed areas can aid in reduction of wind damage, snow load and water loss. Burlap should be promptly removed when temperatures begin to rise in early spring.
- Mulching to protect and insulate root zones.
- Anti-desiccants can be applied to reduce water loss. It is recommended on a monthly basis from December through February for broadleaf evergreens and/or new transplants. The anti-desiccant material is a waxy substance used to cover water releasing organs called stomates. It can help reduce winter injury, desiccation and transplant stress/shock.

As with anything, these practices should be done properly and with care. A Certified Arborist can make recommendations for winter protection by inspecting your landscape, plant material and site specifications.

Sincerely,
Rebekah Schulz

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Plant Health Care Manager