

Do You Have Winter Injury in Your Yard?

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Snow melt reveals lawns that have been covered up for many months, at the same time exposing damage to lawns and plants. This column visits about the most common lawn issues exposed this spring.

RABBITS, SQUIRRELS VOLES OH NO!

This spring, one of the most common questions I have been getting is, "what caused all the rows of dead grass in my lawn?" Voles are likely the culprit. They are quite similar to field mice that are found in fields but also are common in home lawns and yards. Unlike lots of mammals, voles remain active all winter long, happy to scamper around in their under-snow tunnels, feeding on grass, other plants and seeds. They will often eat the grass right down to the ground and leave the leftover dry grass behind or pile it up in little nests during the winter. They often leave these long, twisty narrow trails over the lawn. If you see these, just rake up the dead grass and get rid of it. Usually this damage is just cosmetic and chances are that the lawn will grow back just fine later this spring.

Voles will also feed on woody plants, often down close to the ground, near the base of the plant where it was likely covered with snow and provided a protected place for these little critters to live during the winter. Check the base of your shrubs and trees to see if there is damage. Voles are small field mice with tiny mouths so they damage the stems of plants mostly by gnawing away at the bark, taking lots of small bites. In many cases they will feed all

the way around a stem which will usually kill the stem and in some cases the whole plant.

Rabbits and squirrels will also feed on trees and shrubs, usually eating the bark or in some cases cutting off the whole plant. Rabbits will take out much larger chunks of bark with each bite or leave an angled cut to the end of the stem. Squirrels will usually feed higher up in the tree. Often times, you will see individual branches in a shrub, like a juniper or yew that turns brown. If you check it out you will likely see that the bark was chewed off near the base. All you can do is cut off the dead branch close to its source.

WINTER BURN

Winter burn on trees and shrubs is the other most common type of damage that gardeners might see in their home yards this spring. Winter injury occurs most often when we have windy conditions. It will be worse during sunny weather or with windy and extremely cold weather because the air is so dry that it pulls moisture out of the plant's needles. The injury occurs because the plant is in frozen or dry soil so its roots cannot take up the water needed to replace what is lost so the needles become desiccated and turn brown.

In some cases, winter desiccation injury of evergreens can be cosmetic with the browned needles being hidden by new green needles when growth resumes in the spring. The needles that turned brown will not green up again but will probably fall off during the spring and summer. In more severe cases, the small buds on the twigs are also desiccated and killed, in addition to the



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Extensive vole damage like this will likely kill the shrub.

needles so that the plant will not green out again.

Surrounding branches may eventually cover the browned portion of the plant but winter injury like this will often recur in future years. Thorough watering in late summer and fall can help but in many cases the real problem is that the site is not appropriate for the plant that was selected.

Extreme cold temperatures can also cause winter injury, to both evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs. But that type of injury will most likely affect the buds on the twigs of the trees or shrubs.

Injury like this can occur at any time of the winter but will often happen in the spring, as plants begin to come out of dormancy and are not as

cold hardy as they were earlier in the winter. If you planted a tree or shrub that is not completely hardy to your hardiness zone, you may be more likely to suffer partial damage or the complete loss of a tree during a tough winter.

The flower buds of certain types of trees are especially sensitive to cold in the spring. Apricots, for example, will usually survive our winters but they tend to come out of dormancy earlier than many of our other trees and shrubs. Their flower buds are generally the first buds to break and they are particularly sensitive to late spring frosts and cold spells. Consequently, while many people grow apricots, they may only get a fruit crop every three to four years, if they are lucky. In some cases

the root system may be killed by severe winter conditions. If that happens, the tree may leaf out but then the leaves suddenly turn brown and the plant is dead.

BENEFITS OF MULCHING

Most of our herbaceous perennial plants are more protected from winter injury because generally the plant's buds are located beneath the ground which offers them some protection from the cold. Good snow cover during the winter offers significantly more protection from the cold.

Unfortunately, snow cover often comes and goes, depending on the temperature. Mulching your plants, particularly those that might not be fully hardy in your area, can offer winter-long protection from the coldest temperatures during the winter.

Speaking of mulch — don't be in too much of a hurry to take that mulch off the plants this spring. It will still offer protection to the plants, especially as we start getting some warmer days and those buds under the soil start to grow.

Utilizing plants that are hardy to your area is usually the best way to avoid winter injury but many of us like to push the plant envelope and try some of those Zone 5 and even Zone 6 plants once in a while. I have to admit, that it is fun to gamble a little bit in the garden and try some of those more "exotic" plants and see what happens. Some years you might get lucky and in other years, not so much. But at least you had the fun of growing something that most of your other gardening friends did not have in their gardens.

For more information on winter injury, visit igrow.org.

Applied Service



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Employees of Applied Engineering were recently recognized for their years of service with the company. Pictured are, from left: Don Woehl, 15 years; Trent Schmidt, 10 years; Chad Harris, 20 years; Yonas Afework, 25 years; Brian Lackas, 15 years. Not Pictured: Thanh Tran, 15 years.

Beadle Field Trip



=SUBMITTED PHOTO

Approximately 77 Beadle Elementary School students and 12 parents and grandparents traveled to Cottonwood Day Use Area to enjoy learning stations which included: Personal Floatation Device Re-lays, fish and casting, playground, scavenger hunt, Frisbee golf, and freeze pops in the shelter. Thanks to Karla Zuetenhorst from the USACE and Dugan Smith from the National Park Service for manning stations and helping us organize. It was a beautiful, fun and safe day!

Jolene Green Earns Masters Award

Harvey Youngberg, broker/owner of CENTURY 21 Professional Real Estate, Inc. announced Jolene Green, broker associate with the office, recently earned the Multi-Million Dollar Club Award following her 2013 sales success.

The Multi-Million Dollar Club award honors Century 21 Realtor's that earned 20-29 closed award units within a calendar year.

"Jolene places her real estate wisdom and passion for life into her everyday business, helping to make clients more comfortable with the real estate transaction as they make what may be the most significant purchase of their lives," said Youngberg.

"Jolene is a valued and trusted real estate resource for the Yankton community and surrounding area and a major contributor to the overall success of CENTURY 21 Professional Real Estate, Inc. and the CENTURY 21 System as a whole."

"It is truly an honor to receive the Multi-Million Dollar Club Award and be recognized among such talented and dedicated group of real estate sales professionals," said Green.

CENTURY 21 Professional Real Estate, Inc. is a full-service brokerage located at 1701 Broadway Avenue, Yankton, specializing in Residential, Commercial, Vacation and Rural properties located in SD and NE. See our properties on: www.yanktonrealestate.com, www.century21.com. Century 21 also belongs to the Lewis & Clark MLS; you can contact our office at (605) 665-8970.



Green

Schlingman Earns Diamond Award

Harvey Youngberg, broker/owner of Century 21 Professional Real Estate is pleased to announce that Carla Schlingman, broker associate with the office, was recently recognized as one of CENTURY 21 Real Estate(r) LLC System's top-producers nationwide when it honored her with the coveted diamond level CENTURY 21 Masters Award, it is one of Century 21 systems top honors.

Diamond level status is awarded to an agent who has met 48 or more closed transaction sides within a calendar year. A gold-plated lapel pin with diamond accent is awarded to the agent during the Awards Ceremony, in addition to a trophy and a personal invitation to attend a CENTURY 21 Top Agent Retreat.

"Carla places her real estate wisdom and passion for life into her everyday business, helping to make clients more comfortable with the real estate transaction as they make what may be the most significant purchase of their lives," said Youngberg.

"Carla is a valued and trusted real estate resource for the Yankton & the surrounding communities and a major contributor to the overall success of CENTURY 21 Professional Real Estate and the CENTURY 21 System as a whole."

"It is truly an honor to receive the Masters Award and be recognized among such talented and dedicated group of real estate sales professionals," said Schlingman.



Schlingman

Vermillion To Celebrate Rhubarb Day

VERMILLION — Rhubarb Day will once again be observed at the W. H. Over Museum in Vermillion on Saturday, June 7, beginning at 1:30 p.m.

Recipes will be tested and tasted and everyone is encouraged to bring in their favorite old rhubarb creation or to try something new. Prizes will be awarded and the categories include anything that you want to make that takes rhubarb.

At 2:15 p.m., Rana Sample of Vermillion will speak about the creation and display of barn quilts. She will talk about where these quilts can be seen in the Vermillion area and she will also discuss how to create a quilt for outdoor display.

The Museum hopes to paint and hang some quilts on the outside of the Over. If you have a favorite apron or one that has belonged to someone in your family, bring it along for display.

Keep Yankton Beautiful

Cleaunup Really Cleans Up!

Keep Yankton Beautiful held their annual Great American Cleanup on Saturday, April 12th with beautiful weather abiding and a very good volunteer turnout. Keep Yankton Beautiful is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, and the Great American Cleanup is a national effort beautify our nation's communities. A total of 300 volunteers participated this year in cleaning up garbage floating about our streets, alleys and fence lines in and around Yankton. A total of almost 4000 pounds of trash was collected. That's almost two tons!

Patrick Slowey from Slowey Construction, Inc. and KYB Board member Tom Nelson volunteered their time and vehicles to pick up collected garbage at the end of various clean up routes. Other Board members Denise Wubben, Tim Butler, Jim & Cindy Filips and Craig & Cheryl Sommer also assisted Director Camille Swift-Slowey with registrations, route designations and the disbursement of complimentary donuts, coffee and bottled water provisions and also participated in the actual route clean ups as well. Other KYB Board members assisted with pre-planning of the event.

Keep Yankton Beautiful would also like to thank our national G.A.C. sponsor GLAD for trash bags for the event. Our sincere appreciation goes out to the various local sponsors that donated items for the Great American Cleanup event. Bomgaar's,



COURTESY PHOTO

This group of Mount Marty College volunteers cleaned up around Chalkstone Hill and collected 27 bags of trash.

Avera Sacred Heart Hospital and MidAmerican Energy donated the gloves used for garbage pick up. MidAmerican also provided biodegradable trash bags for the event. Walmart provided the donuts and our local Starbucks donated the coffee.

We thank the City of Yankton for providing the garbage truck and for keeping a running tally for us at the landfill. We thank the Parks & Rec. Department for the use of the picnic shelter in Memorial Park and we'd

like to thank the Yankton Police Department for sending Officer Shoberg to do a safety briefing prior to sending our volunteers out along the roads.

Various individuals, families and larger groups attended the day of the cleanup. Such groups were

Emmanuel Church, First National Bank and our local Boys & Girls Club. Millennium Recycling sponsored the Boys & Girls Club youth group by providing fluorescent EcoManiacs t-shirts for safety purposes along their route. Some groups did their cleanups during the week prior to the actual event such as Sapa, the Yankton High School students, Mount Marty College and the Sacred Heart Middle Schoolers. Sapa employees picked up over 1400 pounds of trash from the roads around their facility and surrounding roads and fields. Their group did an amazing job! Dr. Hejl and the science teachers from Yankton High School lined up 170 student volunteers from their Biology classes to collect trash around the high school grounds and down West City Limits Road. It is such a wonderful thing to see the next generation getting involved in the stewardship of our community!

It was humbling to see such a tremendous display of community spirit involved throughout the week. We would like to extend our gratitude to all the donors and all the amazing volunteers that participated in our Great American Cleanup! Thank you and we hope to see you all again next year!

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