



WINTER BURN IN WISCONSIN

This Wisconsin winter was especially harsh and much winter burn occurred due to the cold temps, high winds & dry air that dehydrated many evergreens. Yews, Junipers, some Spruce and Arborvitae seem to have been hit the hardest. Broad-leaf evergreens like Rhododendron, Holly & Boxwood are also looking quite burnt too.

Many of the shrubs listed above are very hardy if they are a northern grown "zone 4" species. There are some things that you can do to help the shrub repair the damage:

Shake the branches to loosen debris & dislodge loose needles.

Apply (now) a product called "Super Thrive." We sell it at the nursery. The cost is \$14.99 for 4 ounces. It goes along way and it's good for other uses too.

Trim or sheer the shrubs now, but not too deep into the interior. Lay down old bed sheets, drapes or burlap to catch the trimmings which will save cleanup time and back pain. Brush clippings out rigorously and pick up all the trimmings. Blast with the garden hose gun attachment immediately after trimming.

Around mid-May apply 5 gallons of a double action fertilizer called MirAcid per plant. Mix about 2 tablespoons per 5 gallons or about 1 teaspoon per gallon. Apply over the foliage and around the root zone. Prune new growth slightly in June. Keep the plant hydrated but not soggy now and through the fall.

To prevent burning next year, consider these procedures if practical according to the size & species:

In mid-November, do a deep root watering by letting the hose run at a slow trickle, the size of a pencil diameter for 20 minutes per plant. Apply a liberal layer of natural bark mulch around the base of the shrub in fall to slow down freezing and thawing and to insulate it from deep frost. In stone beds, put down a layer of breathable landscape fabric before applying the bark for easy removal in spring.

In Late November & January thaws, apply an anti-desiccant spray like Wilt Pruf or Wilt stop.

Staple chicken wire then burlap to wooden stakes driven in around the base of the plant. This will help protect them from wind, and help prevent dehydration. The chicken wire will help support the burlap & keep out rabbits too.

Don't trim evergreens in the fall. When burning occurs in winter, it will get into the interior branches that didn't have time to harden off properly due to late season trimming. Instead, "prune in June". Never fertilize in fall as this encourages new tender growth that will not have time to "harden off" properly.

When buying new plantings, be sure you are getting "Northern Grown" stock & is suitable for "zone 4." Try to avoid planting near dryer & furnace vents or where reflections can cause heat in winter & summer.

Most of all, don't give up right away, nature is amazing at healing itself. Some plants recover on their own & re bud beautifully with very little help at all.

If you need more specific help on your landscape questions, call Joe @ Fox Valley Nursery. Inc. 920-734-4081 or email joe@foxvalleynursery.com