

# The Latest Dirt

La Porte County Master Gardener Newsletter



OCTOBER 2025

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## 2025 MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. on  
Thursday at the La Porte Main Library  
Meeting Room B, unless otherwise noted

October 2	Social Meeting Grant Recipients
<b>Meeting to be held at the Extension Office</b>	
November 6	Business Meeting Elections
December 4	Holiday Dinner Party

## NEXT BOARD MEETING

October 13<sup>th</sup> - 6:00 p.m.  
Extension Office

"THE LATEST DIRT" is published monthly.  
The next deadline is October 20, 2025

[www.lpmastergardener.org](http://www.lpmastergardener.org)

[https://www.facebook.com/MasterGardeners  
LaPorteCounty](https://www.facebook.com/MasterGardenersLaPorteCounty)



PURDUE EXTENSION  
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

## Plants you should NOT Cut Back in the Fall

By: Garden Soul, Website

### Coneflower (Echinacea)

Coneflowers are a favorite among gardeners for their vibrant, daisy-like flowers and ability to attract pollinators. Leaving them standing in the fall provides a food source for birds, as the seed heads offer a natural snack during the winter months.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** The seed heads feed birds, and the dried stems add winter interest to your garden.

**When to Cut Back:** Cut back in early spring when new growth begins to emerge.

### Black-Eyed Susan (Rudbeckia)

Similar to coneflowers, black-eyed Susans have attractive seed heads that provide food for birds and add structure to your winter garden. The foliage also offers a habitat for beneficial insects.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Seed heads are a vital food source for birds, and the stems offer winter protection for insects.

**When to Cut Back:** Trim back in early spring before new shoots appear.

### Coral Bells (Heuchera)

Coral bells have evergreen or semi-evergreen foliage, depending on the climate. Their colorful leaves provide winter interest and protect the plant's crown from freezing temperatures.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Cutting back coral bells in the fall can expose the crown to cold damage and reduce winter protection.

**When to Cut Back:** Remove old or damaged leaves in early spring as new growth starts.

### Russian Sage (Perovskia atriplicifolia)

Russian sage's silvery stems and feathery foliage add a beautiful texture to your winter garden. Leaving the plant standing helps protect the crown and prevents moisture from seeping in, which can cause root rot.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Leaving the stems intact over winter prevents root rot and provides insulation.

**When to Cut Back:** Prune in early spring when new growth appears.

### Bee Balm (*Monarda*)

Bee balm is prone to mildew, so it's best to avoid cutting it back in the fall when damp weather can encourage fungal growth. Its seed heads also attract birds and add winter interest.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Cutting back too early can expose the plant to mildew and reduce winter habitat for insects and birds.

**When to Cut Back:** Trim back in early spring after frost danger has passed.

### Garden Phlox (*Phlox paniculata*)

Garden phlox can be prone to disease, but leaving it standing through the winter helps provide structure and habitat for beneficial insects. Cutting it back in the fall can expose it to harsh winter conditions.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Leaving stems intact offers winter protection and reduces the risk of disease.

**When to Cut Back:** Cut back in early spring, removing old stems and cleaning up the area around the plant.

### Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra spectabilis*)

Bleeding hearts go dormant in late summer or fall, and their foliage naturally dies back. Leaving it in place helps protect the crown from frost and snow, ensuring it remains healthy for the next growing season.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Allowing the foliage to decompose naturally provides insulation for the roots.

**When to Cut Back:** Remove dead foliage in early spring before new growth emerges.

### Stonecrop (*Sedum* spp.)

Sedums, like Autumn Joy, have thick, fleshy stems that hold up well throughout winter. Their dried flower heads provide structure and visual interest to your garden during the colder months.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Sedums add winter interest and can tolerate cold weather without protection.

**When to Cut Back:** Cut back in spring before new growth begins.

### Lavender (*Lavandula*)

Lavender doesn't respond well to heavy pruning, especially in fall. Cutting it back can leave it vulnerable to winter dieback, particularly in colder climates.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Pruning in fall can damage the plant and reduce its cold tolerance.

**When to Cut Back:** Trim back lightly in early spring after new growth appears.

### Japanese Anemone (*Anemone hupehensis*)

Japanese anemones have delicate, fibrous roots that can suffer from frost heaving if cut back too soon. Leaving them intact helps protect the roots and crown over winter.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Cutting back can increase the risk of root damage from frost heaving.

**When to Cut Back:** Prune back in early spring when new growth is visible.

### Hellebore (*Helleborus*)

Hellebores bloom in late winter or early spring, and their evergreen foliage protects the buds from cold temperatures. Cutting them back in the fall can damage the developing blooms.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Protects new flower buds and provides winter foliage.

**When to Cut Back:** Prune in early spring, removing any damaged or diseased leaves.

### Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)

Cardinal flowers are sensitive to winter conditions and benefit from the protection their foliage provides. Cutting back the plant can expose it to frost damage and reduce its chances of returning in spring.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Helps insulate the crown and protect roots from freezing temperatures.

**When to Cut Back:** Trim back in early spring when the ground starts to thaw.

### Hardy Geranium (*Geranium spp.*)

Hardy geraniums have delicate root systems that benefit from the insulation of dead foliage over winter. Cutting back the plant too soon can expose the roots to cold damage.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Leaving foliage intact provides root protection and prevents frost heaving.

**When to Cut Back:** Prune in early spring to make way for new growth.

### Brunnera (*Brunnera macrophylla*)

Brunnera, also known as Siberian bugloss, has large, heart-shaped leaves that add texture to your garden. Leaving the foliage in place helps protect the plant's crown over winter.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** The foliage provides winter protection for the plant's crown and roots.

**When to Cut Back:** Trim back dead leaves in early spring as new growth begins.

### Astilbe (*Astilbe spp.*)

Astilbe's airy flower plumes provide texture and interest to the winter garden. Cutting back the plant in the fall can expose the roots and crown to frost damage.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** The foliage offers insulation and protects the roots from winter damage.

**When to Cut Back:** Remove dead foliage in early spring before new growth emerges.

While it's tempting to cut back all your perennials in the fall to create a tidy garden, it's important to leave certain plants standing to protect them from harsh winter conditions and to provide habitat for birds and beneficial insects.

### Lady's Mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*)

Lady's Mantle doesn't really need to be pruned. In fact, some gardeners allow these plants to grow a bit wild. However, if you want to keep your garden beds looking pristine, avoid fall pruning.

**Why Not to Cut Back:** Removing lady's mantle foliage late in the season will make the plant's roots more vulnerable to winter damage.

**When to Cut Back:** Cut back lady's mantle plants in spring instead

## Shrubs

### Hydrangeas

[Pruning hydrangeas](#) (click on the link to the left for information on correct pruning of hydrangeas) can be a bit confusing because there's a lot of variety in this plant group. The cold hardy hydrangea varieties that bloom on new wood can be successfully pruned in autumn. However, other hydrangeas, like oakleaf, bigleaf (mophead), mountain, and climbing hydrangeas, flower on old wood and should only be cut back in spring or summer after the plant finishes flowering.

## Oakleaf Hydrangea

[Hydrangea pruning](#) can be confusing because of the variations between type. [Oakleaf hydrangea](#) is a North American native shrub with oak-shaped leaves and pretty flower panicles that change from white to pink throughout the summer.

While some other [types of hydrangeas](#) can be pruned in the fall [pruning oakleaf hydrangeas](#) should not be done at this time. They bloom on old wood, and pruning late in the season can trim off buds set for next year. Instead, prune your shrubs in late summer as the flowers begin to fade.

Oakleaf hydrangea doesn't need a lot of pruning unless you want to manage its size, which can be very large

## Rhododendrons and azaleas

[Azaleas and rhododendrons](#) belong to the same plant family and their pruning requirements are similar as a result. Because these plants flower on old wood, pruning [azaleas and rhododendrons](#) in fall will remove their flower buds and prevent the plants from blooming the following spring. To avoid this, only [prune azaleas](#) and [rhododendrons in late spring](#) to early summer, no more than three weeks after the plants finish blooming.

## Lilacs

Pruning is an essential task if you keep [lilac shrubs](#) (*Syringa* spp.) in your garden as these plants can get unruly and grow over 30 feet tall if they are not cut back from time to time. However, like rhododendrons, lilacs only bloom on old wood, and pruning plants late in the season will remove the plant's flower buds and reduce bloom intensity. Instead of fall pruning, lilac bushes should be cut back immediately after they finish blooming in late spring to early summer.

## Forsythia

Like lilacs, [forsythia shrubs](#) are fast-growing plants that can quickly overcrowd garden beds if they aren't pruned every year or two. However, these plants only bloom on old wood and, if you prune forsythia in autumn, you risk removing the plant's flower buds. To avoid this, only prune forsythia bushes in spring after the flowers fade and never cut away more than a third of forsythia branches at one time.

Source for Shrubs:  
Lauren Landers  
Better Homes and Gardens

## ASSOCIATION NEWS

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### Letter from the President

Vicki Znavor

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Hello everyone! I hope that you all had a wonderful summer. As always, our members have been busy not only with our own gardens, but with helping others grow as well. I am so proud of all that we do.

I wanted to ask you all if there is more that we can do to communicate with you. We do our very best to reach out, but it seems that on occasion there are some who are unaware of various events or activities. We talk about upcoming events and include them in this newsletter, which is really a wonderful resource to understand what's going on as well as meeting dates, etc. In addition, we send out meeting "save the date" cards, post events on Facebook and our website, send information via email and talk about events at our meetings. If there is something else that you need to stay informed, let's talk about it.

I'm excited about our October meeting. Please note that the meeting is going to be at the **Extension Office on Thursday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>**. Because we have a full agenda, we will start the actual meeting no later than 6:15. Our grant recipients will present the projects they were able to complete with our help. We will have presentations by Family Advocates, The La Porte County Historical Society, United Methodist, Eastport Neighborhood Association and Kingsford Heights Elementary. Helping others grow is our mission and we are so happy to have helped these wonderful organizations.

We were happy to participate in the Sunflower Fair once again. Special thanks to Theresa Dzoga-Borg for her leadership in this effort. I'd also like to thank Metta Barbour, Amy Cooper, Janet Davis, Susie Keiffer, Nancy Fournier, Kathleen Fox, Katie Mitschelen, Donna Pouzar, Mary Beth Rebedeau-Warner, Deborah Sarver, Vicki Sparks, and Kim Varga for their help and support.

Our Nominations Committee is beginning to undertake the work of compiling a list of potential officers for 2026. The requirement to seek office is that you must be in good standing and you must not have been an officer for the last two terms. Each term is two years. I know that many of you have held officer positions in the past, but I would love for you to consider helping again. We have a good mix of new and experienced members, and your help is needed. Please let me, Steve Zolvinski, Kathleen Fox or Tom Boesen, know if you have an interest in a board position. Thanks to Steve, Kathleen and Tom for helping with this effort.

Thanks again for all you do. I hope to see you at our meeting on October 2nd your attendance matters.

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La Porte Master Gardener Association  
Business Meeting Minutes - September 4, 2025  
La Porte County Public Library Main Branch – Room B

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The meeting was called to order at 6:21p.m. by President, Vicki Znavor. Including the board members, there were a total of 15 members present.

The July business meeting minutes were approved.

A discussion ensued regarding the Garden Show for 2026. The overwhelming consensus was not to have a Garden Show in 2026. A discussion was also held to perhaps take a break from the Garden Show and reflect back on our work.



Other ideas came up, such as having a La Porte Garden Walk, or having small educational community events. Further discussion is needed as well as members stepping up to lead an event and volunteer.

Our big event for 2026 will be hosting Dr. Doug Tallamy, author of *Bringing Nature Home* and other books about native planting. He is a well-known entomologist, a popular speaker and creator of Home Grown National Park website. LPMGA will host this event at the Civic Auditorium in La Porte. The topic of Mr. Tallamy's presentation will be ***"Saving Nature in Your Yard"***. The Civic Auditorium has the capacity for 1500 people. In addition to Doug Tallamy as a speaker, a variety of informational organizations will have booths to educate the public about natives, invasives, county and state environmental and gardening services. These organizations will not be selling anything – just offering information. This event will be free and open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Attendees can visit with these informational organizations from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. Mr. Tallamy's presentation will run from 10:30 to Noon. Volunteers will be needed on the day of event.

We are at the point in the year to elect new board members. Four new board members are needed. The nominating committee consists of Steve Zolvinski, Kathleen Fox and Tom Boesen. The committee members will call other members for board applicants. Please consider becoming a board member.

Metta Barbour will complete the 3 months for Janet Davis, who will assume Joan Kintzele's position until 2026.

There are no speaking engagements currently scheduled.

After discussion about a Holiday Greens Workshop, we are currently working on the feasibility of holding the workshop in November. Amy offered her remodeled barn as a location, and Donna Pouzar and Marcy Dailey are willing to lend their expertise. We agreed that holding the event on a Sunday in November from 1-4 would be good timing. More to come but if anyone has ideas or would like to help, please contact Karen Sarver.

Theresa spoke about the Sunflower Fair, giving a synopsis of events and asked for volunteers.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m. by Vicki Znavor

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## Sunflower Fair 2025

By: Theresa Dzoga-Borg

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On Saturday, September 20, 2025, the City of La Porte held its 26th annual Sunflower Fair. The Master Gardeners were asked to oversee the Sunflower contest. This year there were 23 entrants, about double the entrants from last year. We were busy!!! Even the rain didn't dampen our spirit. We had so much fun and met so many great people.

Mayor Tom Dermody joined us and graciously announced the winners. Four of us, including the mayor, carried the tallest sunflower to the stage. It measured a whopping 17 feet and 3 inches. Mayor Dermody enthusiastically encouraged all to see this spectacular flower. He was a fun-loving announcer.

Our very own Master Gardener Steve Zolvinski won first place for growing the largest sunflower head, measuring 17 inches.



I would like to give a heartfelt “Thank You” and a big shout out to all the volunteers: Metta Barbour, Amy Cooper, Janet Davis, Susie Keiffer, Nancy Fournier, Kathleen Fox, Katie Mitschelen, Donna Pouzar, Mary Beth Rebedeau-Warner, Deborah Sarver, Vicki Sparks, and Kim Varga. As volunteers, they worked hard at setting up the booth and making it look so appealing, closing down and putting all the materials back to storage, speaking to close to 100 people about gardening, signing up 6 people interested in the Master Gardener program, enjoying time with kids and talking about gardening and their experiences. The kids’ raffle basket filled with books and garden tools was won by a young reader and gardener. The measuring and counting of the sunflower entries took several of the volunteers to work together to complete the task with integrity. Hard work, but so much fun.



As a gardener, I could not allow all the sunflowers (organic matter) to be swept up and thrown into the landfill. After the contest, I cut down the plants and brought a carload to the La Porte Recycling and Compost site. Upon my return, ready to load up again, Donna Pouzar showed up and told me she would load up her pickup truck with the remaining sunflowers. Thank you, Donna!!! I already calculated that I had at least three more runs. When we loaded up Donna’s truck, I realized that I would have had at least five more runs. Remember that 17 footer? Well, it is a LOT of organic matter!!! Thank you, Donna. I am sure Donna has a story about unloading since there was a 3-alarm fire at the Compost site.

We have photographs of the event because of our volunteers. It is easy to take photos with our phones. It is a lot of time and work to share the photos so we can have this on our social media: Facebook and our website. Thank you!

I would like to thank the Master Gardeners for their support in helping me to organize this event. A special thanks to Sue Salisbury for making all the copies and spending time with me to coordinate, Vicki for bringing the heavy MG things to the extension office and producing the beautiful posters for our booth, and Carol Nolan and Susie Kieffer for their wisdom and helping me get the publications and other necessary paperwork. We made a positive showing to our community.

Sharing peace and gratitude,  
Theresa Dzoga-Borg

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### Free Sawdust for your Compost Pile

If you have a compost pile and would like to add sawdust, I have lots to give away. If you’re interested, contact Donna Pouzar. Bring a bucket and load up. Below is a link on the benefits of sawdust in your compost pile.

As a composting material, sawdust decomposes very slowly due to its high C:N ratio (high carbon content), and needs to be combined with nitrogen-rich materials, such as kitchen scraps, grass clippings, coffee grounds, blood & bone fertilizer or manure to break down.

A handy tip when composting sawdust is to ensure proper aeration and moisture levels in the compost pile to facilitate effective decomposition.

#### Source:

<https://deepgreenpermaculture.com/2024/03/28/the-dos-and-donts-of-using-sawdust-for-composting-understanding-risks-and-environmental-impact/>

## EXTENSION OFFICE

### JESI'S CORNER

Just because summer is winding down doesn't mean your time in the garden has to end. In fact, fall is one of the most rewarding times to dig in the dirt. With cooler weather, fewer pests, and soil that's still warm from the summer sun, autumn sets the stage for success in the garden.

Fall is perfect for planting cool-season vegetables like spinach, lettuce, kale, and radishes. These crops thrive in crisp air and can even become sweeter after a light frost. Imagine enjoying fresh salads straight from your garden well into the season!

It's also a wonderful time to think ahead. Planting spring bulbs like tulips and daffodils now ensures a cheerful burst of color once winter fades. Perennials, shrubs, and trees planted in fall have a chance to establish strong roots, giving them a healthy head start for next year.

Best of all, fall gardening is simply enjoyable. Cooler days make outdoor work pleasant, and there's a special satisfaction in knowing you're setting the stage for a beautiful and productive garden season ahead.

So, grab your gloves and savor the season. Your garden—and your future self—will thank you for the extra care you put in this fall!

## OCTOBER GARDEN

### HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- Keep poinsettia in complete darkness for 15 hours each day — for example, between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. — for eight to 10 weeks until red bracts begin to show.
- Pot spring-flowering bulbs to force into bloom indoors. Moisten soil and refrigerate 10 to 13 weeks. Transfer to a cool, sunny location, and allow an additional three to four weeks for blooming.

### 2025 EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT	VICKI ZNAVOR
VICE PRESIDENT	TOM BOESEN
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY	MARIA MAULE
RECORDING SECRETARY	THERESA DZOGA-BORG*
TREASURER	SUSAN KIEFFER*
EDUCATION COMMITTEE/ SPEAKERS BUREAU	JANET DAVIS* OPEN KAREN SARVER

PAST PRESIDENT CAROL NOLAN

\*INDICATES MEMBER IS FILLING ANOTHER PERSON'S TERM, OR EXTENDED THEIR TERM WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE BOARD

### 2025 PROJECT COORDINATORS

#### **Friendship Botanic Gardens**

Rima Binder \_\_\_\_\_ 219-878-8128  
\_\_\_\_\_ [rimabinder@comcast.net](mailto:rimabinder@comcast.net)

#### **Garden Hotline**

Extension Office \_\_\_\_\_ 219-324-9407

#### **Garden Show**

Theresa Dzoba-Borg \_\_\_\_\_ 773-960-5848  
\_\_\_\_\_ [dzozo@yahoo.com](mailto:dzozo@yahoo.com)

Ann Klosinski \_\_\_\_\_ 219-872-8367  
\_\_\_\_\_ [annak47@comcast.net](mailto:annak47@comcast.net)

Carol Nolan \_\_\_\_\_ 331-903-0091  
\_\_\_\_\_ [cnolan41@yahoo.com](mailto:cnolan41@yahoo.com)

Karen Sarver \_\_\_\_\_ 219-921-9704  
\_\_\_\_\_ [ksarver@csinet.net](mailto:ksarver@csinet.net)

#### **La Porte Builders Assn. Home Expo**

Donna Pouzar \_\_\_\_\_ 219-363-2960  
\_\_\_\_\_ [pouzdlp@icloud.com](mailto:pouzdlp@icloud.com)

#### **Pioneer Land School Tours**

Linda Hough \_\_\_\_\_ 219-324-0424  
\_\_\_\_\_ [ljhough614@gmail.com](mailto:ljhough614@gmail.com)

#### **Pioneer Heritage Garden**

Connie Shei \_\_\_\_\_ 219-362-4866  
\_\_\_\_\_ [jshei@comcast.net](mailto:jshei@comcast.net)

#### **Sunflower Fair**

Linda Hough \_\_\_\_\_ 219-324-0424  
\_\_\_\_\_ [ljhough614@gmail.com](mailto:ljhough614@gmail.com)



**STANDING COMMITTEE COORDINATORS**

History Book \_\_\_\_\_ Donna Pouzar

Hospitality \_\_\_\_\_ Eunice Conway

Librarian \_\_\_\_\_ Linda Hough

Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_ Donna Pouzar

Speakers Bureau See Executive Board

**Purdue Extension Office** \_\_ 324-9407Jesi Davenport \_ [jfurness@purdue.edu](mailto:jfurness@purdue.edu)Sue Salisbury \_ [salisbk@purdue.edu](mailto:salisbk@purdue.edu)

*The Latest Dirt* is published monthly. The deadline for submission is the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. Our mission is to publish articles and events of interest to other Master Gardeners and the community. Articles about personal experiences, suggestions on gardening books, catalogs, helpful websites, tips and tricks, book reviews, seminars you've attended are welcomed.

Submission requirements: Articles should be no longer than a page and can include photos. References must be included. Latin names of plants should be italicized. We do not accept articles pertaining to medicinal information. Master Gardeners will get volunteer hours for time spent working on an article.

### **Buy, Sell, Trade at the Trading Shed**

#### **Place your free ad in "The Latest Dirt"**

Tools, tillers, mowers, plants - anything garden related. Keep ads brief. Provide your phone number and/or e-mail address. Ads will be limited to space available.

Information must be submitted by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month to:

**[pouzdlp@icloud.com](mailto:pouzdlp@icloud.com)**

PURDUE UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL  
OPPORTUNITY/EQUAL ACCESS/AFFIRMATIVE  
ACTION INSTITUTION

- Houseplants, especially those grown outdoors during the summer, commonly drop some or many of their leaves in response to the lower natural light intensity in the autumn and reduced light intensity indoors.
- Water indoor plants less frequently, and discontinue fertilizer as plants slow down or stop growing for the winter season.

### **GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables and small fruits)**

- Harvest root crops and store in a cold (32 F), humid location. Storing produce in perforated plastic bags is a convenient, easy way to increase humidity.
- Harvest brussels sprouts as they develop in the axils of the leaves from the bottom of the stem. Brussels sprouts will continue to develop up the stem.
- Harvest pumpkins and winter squash before frost, but when rind is hard and fully colored. Store in a cool location until ready to use.
- Harvest gourds when stems begin to brown and dry. Cure at 70-80 F for two to four weeks.
- Harvest mature, green tomatoes before frost and ripen indoors in the dark. Warmer temperatures lead to faster ripening.
- Asparagus top growth should not be removed until foliage yellows. Let foliage stand over winter to collect snow for insulation and moisture.
- Remove plant debris from the garden to protect next year's plantings from insect and disease buildup. Compost plant refuse by alternating layers of soil, plant material, and manure or commercial fertilizer.
- Have garden soil tested for fertilizer needs every three to five years.
- Incorporate organic matter in fall to avoid the rush of garden activities and waterlogged soil in spring. Soils prepared in the fall tend to warm faster and allow earlier planting in spring.
- Dig tender garden flower bulbs for winter storage. Gladiolus corms should be dug when leaves begin turning yellow. Caladiums, geraniums and tuberous begonias should be lifted before killing frost. Dig canna and dahlia roots after a heavy frost. Allow to air dry, then pack in dry peat moss or vermiculite, and store in a cool location.
- Complete planting of spring-flowering bulbs.

**YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals, and fruits)**

- Keep plants, especially newly planted stock, well-watered until ground freezes.
- Have soil ready to mound roses for winter protection. Do not mound or cover roses until after leaves drop and soil is near freezing, usually late November or early December.
- Strawberry plants need protection from winter's extremes, but applying winter mulch too early may cause crowns to rot. Apply winter protection when plants are dormant but before temperatures drop below 20F, usually late November or early December.
- Rake or shred large, fallen tree leaves, such as maple, to prevent them from matting down and smothering grass. Raking smaller leaves, such as honey locust, is optional.
- Continue mowing lawn as needed.

