

December

- Minimize traffic on a frozen lawn to reduce winter damage.
- Do filling and grading around the yard. The loose soil will settle during the cold months.
- Save cardboard cylinders from holiday wrapping paper for making biodegradable, cutworm collars. Cut cylinders into 3 inch tubes to fit over transplants.
- To discourage insects from hatching when nuts, cones, and seed pods are brought indoors for holiday arrangements, place them in the oven on the low setting for an hour.
- Start conditioning seed that require stratification, such as many of the woody ornamentals. Plant them in a cold frame or put them in the refrigerator or freezer for the required amount of time.
- Check any fruits and vegetables, or corms and tubers that are in storage. Sort out any that show signs of disease and dispose of them.
- If stored bulbs begin to shrivel, they are too dry. Place them in a container with potting medium, peat moss or sawdust to stop the loss of water.
- Check dahlia tubers and gladiolus corms in storage. If they are sprouting, place them in a cooler spot. If they show signs of shriveling, rewrap them in ventilated plastic bags. Moldy or damaged roots must be removed and discarded. Move healthy bulbs to a location with better ventilation and set in dry moss.
- Yews, junipers, holly, boxwood, broad-leaf evergreens and many deciduous trees and shrubs can be propagated this month. Insert evergreen cuttings in vermiculite or sand in a cool greenhouse. Tie bundles of deciduous cuttings together, and bury in sand in a cold frame. Remove in early spring and plant in a nursery bed.
- Take hardwood cuttings of forsythia, spirea, Japanese quince, wisteria, mock-orange, trumpet-vine, viburnum and other deciduous shrubs.