

October

- Cut back perennial herbs to encourage well-branched growth next year.
- Late fall tilling can help control insects, such as corn borer, corn earworm, cucumber beetle, squash bug, and vine borer, because it exposes overwintering insects to winter conditions.
- When temperatures begin to drop, check for any chemicals that should not freeze and move them to a safe storage place where temperatures do not fall below 40 degrees.
- Fall is a good time to take a soil sample. Soil tests will measure for acidity or alkalinity of the soil and for the levels of some of the major elements needed for plant growth. If lime is indicated, now is a good time to apply it.
- Don't retire your lawn mower, as long as the grass is still growing it should be mowed.
- Remove leaves from the lawn to reduce lawn problems. Compost them or save them for next year's mulch.
- Fall is the time to control broadleaf weeds in the garden, including chickweed, white clover, dandelion, wild onion, plantain, and Canada Thistle. Call your local extension agent for recommendations.
- Ferns can be planted or transplanted in fall.
- Move and divide crowded perennials.
- Cut down stems and foliage of herbaceous perennials when the leaves begin to brown. Be sure to clean up around perennial flowers such as rose and peony. If left on the ground, leaves and stems can harbor diseases and provide convenient places for pests to spend the winter.
- Add mulch to perennial border. A 1-inch layer of weed-free straw or chopped leaves will help conserve soil moisture, protect the root system and reduce plant loss due to heaving during the winter.
- Fall is the best time of year for moving plants. Transplant deciduous trees and shrubs when they are dormant. Evergreen trees or shrubs, however, may be transplanted earlier in the fall before they go dormant.
- Prune dead and diseased branches from trees and shrubs.
- Light pruning of both needle and broadleaf evergreens is recommended in late fall to encourage a strong framework to help the plant overcome any snow damage; Remove and weak or crowded branches.

- It is too late to prune roses because they could become subject to winter injury, however, the rose garden should be raked and cleaned to prevent overwintering of black spot and other diseases. Additional mulch should be added after the ground has frozen.
- Water evergreens thoroughly before the ground freezes.
- Pick bagworms from evergreen shrubs. This will eliminate the spring hatch from overwintered eggs.
- Do not become alarmed if yews, pines, arborvitae and junipers begin their interior to shed their interior needles. It is natural at this time of year.