

Hastings Nature & Garden Center

Things To Do In August

The primary task is to be sure your plants get ample water. With the warmer weather and increased watering, weed control is also very important.

Watering - Vegetable gardens, most flowering plants and the lawn all need about one inch of water every week to keep them green and looking nice. Be sure to water thoroughly and deeply each time you water. When possible, do your watering in the morning so the soil has a chance to warm up before the cooler evening hours set in. Deep watering will induce the plant's roots to grow deeper, where they are less likely to dry out, as well as the added benefit of anchoring the plant into the ground better. The best way to tell if your plants are receiving enough water is to take a trowel or shovel and dig down a few inches. The soil should be moist at least 3 or 4 inches deep to insure that the water is reaching the root zone of the plants. Be sure to check hanging baskets and container grown plants every day during hot weather. Water them thoroughly.

Perennials and annuals

- Pick off dead flowers on your annuals and perennials to ensure more blooms.
- Sow perennial and biennial plants into the garden this month or next.
- Plant container grown perennials, shrubs and trees beginning at the end of this month.
- Divide and transplant spring flowering perennials during the coolest part of the day.
- Prune hybrid roses in late August to promote the most fall blossoms. Remove no more than a third of the vigorous growth. Remove center, crossed, weak, spindly and diseased stems.
- Fertilize roses through September.
- Maintain a spraying schedule to control insects and disease.

Shrubs and trees

- Summer blooming shrubs should be pruned for shape after they have finished flowering. Remove any dead or diseased branches.

Fruits and veggies

- Plant starters or seeds of green onions, carrots, beets, lettuce, spinach, radishes, and winter cauliflower directly into the garden early this month. (See our Fall Vegetable Planting Guide at the Garden Center)

Lawn

- Raise the cutting height of the mower. Taller grass cools the roots and helps to keep the moisture in the soil longer.

House Plants

- Continue to watch for insect or disease damage and take the necessary steps to control the problem.
- Warmer and drier weather means it will be necessary to water and mist your house plants more often.

Odds and ends

- Keep the weeds pulled, before they have a chance to flower and go to seed again.
- Change the water in your bird bath regularly, and keep it filled. Standing water is less healthy for the birds and may become a breeding ground for mosquito larvae.
- Continue to watch for insect, slug and snail, or disease damage throughout the garden and take the necessary steps to control the problem.

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