

Ecologically Sustainable **Maintenance Schedule**

For efficiency, all tasks are presented in the order they should generally be performed.
Estimated customer cost: \$5,000 per year.

SPRING CLEAN UP

PLANT BEDS

- Tidy up by moving sticks and other plant debris to property's designated area. Take trash and excess plant debris off site.

LAWN

- Move winter accumulation of sticks and leaves to property's designated area.

DRAINS

- Lift grates and clear leaves and other debris from all outdoor drains including downspouts, window wells, and lawn drains. Move debris to property's designated area, taking excess material off site.

HARDSCAPE

- Power wash patios, walkways, and driveways with Simple Green Oxy Solve Total Outdoor Pressure Washer Cleaner or similar bio-safe cleaning product. Repair as needed. Clean and arrange outdoor furniture and planters.

TOOLS & EQUIPMENT

- Inventory, clean, repair, and store all winter items.

SPRING REGULAR SERVICE

TREES, BUSHES, HEDGES (WOODY PLANTS)

- **Replace** dead or diseased plants as early in the season as possible, ideally while in dormancy and under guidance of a certified arborist. No species substitutions from original design plan without written permission. Follow original design plan and do not use cultivars or 'nativars' as substitutes for natives.
- **Water** – Set up sprinklers, drip hoses and timers to water all trees and shrubs planted within past three years, with one to two inches of water per week unless at least one inch of rain has fallen. Water in the early morning until soil is saturated, periodically testing and adjusting timers and systems. Water established trees and shrubs during droughts.
- **Prune** - Prune as needed to keep bushes and small trees tidy and at desirable sizes, and to remove dead, damaged, or diseased wood, using industry standards established by the American National Standards Institute. At least one person proficient in pruning should be on site at all times. Do not use hedge shears. Do not create straight edges across the top of hedges. Prune shrubs within 30 days after they have flowered. Large trees, especially oaks, should be pruned only in February to reduce disease risk. Disinfect pruning tools before using them on different plants, and in between job sites to reduce disease risk.
- **Cage** – As needed, replace any caging installed to protect plants from rabbits.
- **Mulch** – For any tree that does not have the ground beneath it covered with plants, maintain 3 inches of shredded hardwood mulch in flat donut shape that does not touch the trunk (not volcano shape).

LIGHTING

- As days lengthen and bird migration intensifies, adjust automatic timers. Keep all fixtures shielded and pointing downward. Replace bulbs as needed, using 2000K bulbs.

PLANT BEDS

- **Weeds** – At the start of each visit, before any work begins, conduct an on-site job-briefing for crew members to learn which plants to pull and which to keep. At least one

person proficient in weed identification must be on site at all times. Weeds must be taken off site.

- **Mulch** – Spread a 3-inch layer of leaf mulch in the beds to retain moisture, suppress weeds, and improve soil.
- **Replace** dead or diseased plants. Do not substitute species from original design plan without written permission. Do not use cultivars or ‘nativars’ as substitutes for natives.
- **Water** – Set up sprinklers, drip hoses and timers to water all beds planted within past three years, with one to two inches of water per week unless at least one inch of rain has fallen. Water in the early morning until soil is saturated, periodically testing and adjusting timers and systems.

TURF

- **Robotic mowers** – Install, test, and launch. Allow extra time to learn and follow all manufacturer directions when setting up the charging station and wires, creating the route, and monitoring gaps and obstacles. If mower had been used in previous year, test its operation so it is ready for the growing season. Walk the entire mower route at the start of each visit to remove obstacles that may be in the way. Inspect mowers at the start of each visit to ensure proper working order. Mow at height of 3½ to 4 inches. Once each month, change the blades and clean the wheels and underside of the deck.
- **Fertilize** once each spring by spreading a quarter-inch layer of fine screened compost after the first cut. Hold fertilization until fall if overseeding is scheduled to take place that year.
- **Weeds** - Remove weeds before they go to seed. Weed pressure becomes greatly reduced when the turf practices listed throughout this document are consistently used.
- **Trim** edges of all walkways and driveways where needed.

SUMMER

TREES, BUSHES & HEDGES (WOODY PLANTS)

- **Water** – Water all trees and shrubs planted within past three years, with one to two inches of water per week unless at least one inch of rain has fallen. Water in the early morning until soil is saturated, periodically testing and adjusting timers and systems. Water established trees and shrubs during droughts.
- **Prune** - Prune as needed to keep bushes and small trees tidy and at desirable sizes, and to remove dead, damaged, or diseased wood, using industry standards established by American National Standards Institute. At least one person proficient in pruning should be on site at all times. Do not use hedge shears. Do not create straight edges across the top of hedges. Prune shrubs within 30 days after they have flowered. Large trees, especially oaks, should be pruned only in February to reduce disease risk. Disinfect pruning tools before using them on different plants, and in between job sites to reduce disease risk.
- **Cage** – As needed, replace any caging installed to protect plants from rabbits.
- **Mulch** – For any tree that does not have the ground beneath it covered with plants, maintain 3 inches of shredded hardwood mulch in flat donut shape that does not touch the trunk (not volcano shape).

PLANT BEDS

- **Weeds** – At the start of each visit, before any work begins, conduct an on-site job-briefing for crew members to learn which plants to pull and which to keep. At least one person proficient in weed identification must be on site at all times. Weeds must be taken off site.
- **Mulch** – Maintain a 3-inch layer of leaf mulch in the beds to retain moisture, suppress weeds, and improve soil.
- **Replace** dead or diseased plants. Do not substitute species from original design plan without written permission. Do not use cultivars or ‘nativars’ as substitutes for natives.
- **Water** – Water all beds planted within past three years, with one to two inches of water per week unless at least one inch of rain has fallen. Water in the early morning until soil is saturated, periodically testing and adjusting timers and systems.

- **Insects** - Many insects are harmless and helpful and should be left alone. Seek guidance when damage to plants seems to require action. Eliminate mosquito breeding areas by draining standing water, keeping gutters clear, and using mosquito dunks where rainwater might inevitably collect. Crew members may want to protect their skin with lemon eucalyptus; wear gloves, long sleeves and pants; and pre-treat clothes with permethrin. If insects interfere with a task, save it for the next visit when possible and eliminate nests when necessary.

TURF

- **Robotic mowers** – Walk the entire mower route at the start of each visit to remove obstacles that may be in the way. Inspect mowers at the start of each visit to ensure proper working order. Mow at height of 3½ to 4 inches. Once each month, change the blades and clean the wheels and underside of the deck. Don't mow when turf has gone dormant.
- **Weeds** - Remove weeds before they go to seed. Weed pressure becomes greatly reduced when the turf practices listed throughout this document are consistently used.
- **Trim** edges of all walkways and driveways where needed.
- **No watering** – Allow turf to go dormant.
- **No fertilizing** in summer.

FALL

TREES, BUSHES & HEDGES (WOODY PLANTS)

- **Water** – Water all trees and shrubs planted within past three years, with one to two inches of water per week unless at least one inch of rain has fallen. Water in the early morning until soil is saturated, periodically testing and adjusting timers and systems. Water established trees and shrubs during droughts. Stop watering after the first hard frost and remove hoses.
- **Prune** - Prune as needed to keep bushes and small trees tidy and at desirable sizes, and to remove dead, damaged, or diseased wood, using industry standards established by American National Standards Institute. At least one person proficient in pruning should be on site at all times. Do not use hedge shears. Do not create straight edges across the top of hedges. Prune shrubs within 30 days after they have flowered. Large trees, especially oaks, should be pruned only in February to reduce disease risk. Disinfect pruning tools before using them on different plants, and in between job sites to reduce disease risk.
- **Cage** – As needed, replace any caging installed to protect plants from rabbits.
- **Mulch** – For any tree that does not have the ground beneath it covered with plants, maintain 3 inches of shredded hardwood mulch in flat donut shape that does not touch the trunk (not volcano shape).
- **Invasive Species Control** – Take advantage of each species' unique autumn color to locate invasive species. Remove sprouts. Plan winter removals for larger trees and shrubs. Buckthorn stays green late into the year, allowing it to really stand out. Norway maple and Callery pear also have distinct colors and hold their leaves longer than natives.

PLANT BEDS

- **Weeds** – At the start of each visit, before any work begins, conduct an on-site job-briefing for crew members to learn which plants to pull and which to keep. At least one person proficient in weed identification must be on site at all times. Weeds must be taken off site.

- **Fall Clean Up** – Determine how to approach each bed for a tidy winter appearance, either leaving stems or trimming them down to 3 inches tall, with some beds featuring plants that remain sturdy and attractive throughout the winter. Move cuttings to designated area or take off site.
- **Mulch** – Maintain a 3-inch layer of leaf mulch in the beds to retain moisture, suppress weeds, and improve soil. Use leaves from site when possible, shredding and spreading evenly.
- **Water** – Water all beds planted within past three years, with one to two inches of water per week unless at least one inch of rain has fallen. Water in the early morning until soil is saturated, periodically testing and adjusting timers and systems. Stop watering after the first hard frost and remove hoses.

TURF

- **Robotic mowers** – Mow at reduced height of 2½ to 3 inches. For last mow of the season reduce again to 2 inches. Mow over leaves until heavy leaf-drop begins. Walk the entire mower route at the start of each visit to remove obstacles that may be in the way. Inspect mowers at the start of each visit to ensure proper working order. Once each month, change the blades and clean the wheels and underside of the deck.
- **Core aerate** - once each fall with plug-style aerator capable of 20-40 holes per square foot.
- **Fertilize** - Spread a quarter-inch layer of fine screened compost over entire turf area and raking it in.
- **Overseed** every fall or as needed, ideally just before a rainy period. Spread seed according to specifications for the seed being used. Dethatch, aerate, fertilize, overseed and water, in that order. Keep seeds moist until germination, then water regularly until grass is approximately 4 inches tall.
- **Fall clean up** – Mow for last time at height of 2 inches. Move leaves off lawn to be used as mulch in plant beds, with excess leaves moved to property's designated area.
- **Trim** edges of all walkways and driveways where needed.
- **End of mowing season** – clean, maintain, and store equipment.

LIGHTING

- As days shorten and bird migration intensifies, adjust automatic timers. Keep all fixtures shielded and pointing downward. Replace bulbs as needed, using 2000K bulbs.
- As holiday lights are installed, use timers and check for areas on buildings where wildlife issues should be addressed before winter.

WINTER

TREES, BUSHES & HEDGES (WOODY PLANTS)

- **Prune** - Large trees, especially oaks, should be pruned only in February to reduce disease risk, and only by a certified arborist using industry standards established by the American National Standards Institute.
- **Storm cleanup** – Remove any broken branches caught in trees, cleaning jagged wounds as needed. Move fallen sticks to the property's designated area.
- **Invasive Species Removal** - Winter is generally ideal for removal of invasive trees and shrubs, especially when soils are frozen and less susceptible to compaction, and people and wildlife are less active. Learn and follow industry standards for cutting, treating stumps, and handling debris.

SNOW & ICE

- **Be prepared** – Check weather forecast daily. Keep crews, vehicles, and equipment ready for ice, snow, wind, and frigid temperatures, with spare sets of gloves, socks, etcetera on hand. Restock supplies after each storm.
- **Anti-icing**- Up to 3 days before a storm, apply a layer of mixed brine to walkways and driveways. Clear snow as promptly as schedules allow to reduce ice formation, circling back to the site as needed during extended snowfall.

PREPARE FOR SPRING

- **Order** supplies and equipment.
- **Establish** customer agreements.
- **Train crews** on equipment, techniques, and plants.