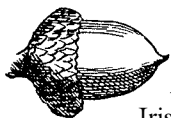




AUTUMN 2011

# Green Words

THE NEWSLETTER OF TREE • TURF • GARDEN • LAND • FOREST



*Press on.* When my Irish grandmother spoke these words during difficult moments of my youth I had visions of a steaming iron and a large wicker basket of wrinkled clothes. How in the world would ironing make me feel any better Grandmama?

Of course that wasn't what she meant, as I now know with body, mind and soul in my 5th decade of life. Even so, rhythmic chores—like ironing, weeding, chopping wood, or raking leaves—accomplish a much needed function and bring a sense of order to life when the greater world feels chaotic and out of control.

This fall I am deeply inspired by our north country communities that continue to *press on* with strength and resilience in the post-Irene restoration efforts; by our employees who *press on* performing hard physical labor every day; and by those who *press on* in the face of tremendous personal losses. Adversity reveals strengths we never knew we had during easier times, and I am grateful for a renewed understanding of *press on*.

And, ironing a large basket of clothes does actually make me feel better.

—Mundy Wilson

## Tips for Restoring Your Flood-Damaged Landscape

WHEN THOUSANDS OF ACRES of normally dry land were inundated following tropical storm Irene, so were the lawns, trees and gardens growing there. Some landscapes were swept away for good along with other devastating property losses. In better news: most plants left standing will survive temporary flooding.

### LAWNS

For those with a home lawn in a flood plain or next to a waterway, removal of as much sediment and silt was job one after tropical storm Irene. After this “river frosting” was removed, the next phase is lawn restoration, either this fall—if there is still time before winter sets in—or early next spring.

Damaged lawns can be separated into two main categories, ranging from a complete reinstallation with truck loads of loam, to basic turf treatments like core aeration, calcium lime, and fertilizer. The more extensive the flooding and sediment layer, the more likely loam will need to be brought in, spread out with a tractor, seeded, and then rolled. Any seeding, possibly this fall, will pay dividends with quicker grass thickening versus having to wait for the soil to warm up and dry out next spring.

*“The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The next best time is now.”*

—CHINESE PROVERB

In many cases, a complete lawn renovation may well be the best choice compared to trying to patch up or fix thinned out or dead sections of lawn. Attempting to match any existing grasses can leave a calico appearance to a lawn, while starting over allows more desirable blends to be utilized, yielding a more consistent turf cover. Before proceeding with a complete restoration it may also be the opportune time to decide how much lawn you really want in your planted landscape—do you love it and like the maintenance chores, or do you dream of creating other outdoor living spaces with patios, walkways, and gardens with native flowers, shrubs and trees? Only you can answer the questions that Irene has raised.

The second type of lawn repair would be a partial renovation where perhaps the back or front was buried in silt, or another area simply became either submerged in water or soaked by heavy rain. Given the massive amount of rainfall during the storm, many soils, particularly sandy ones, will have lost significant nutrient value and will require supplemental treatment of nitrogen and potassium. In this scenario, a normal lawn would do well

—continues page 2

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Benefits of Performing Winter Work

Ideas for Training?

Fall/Winter Checklist

—continued from page 1

to receive a balanced, low to zero phosphate, slow release fertilizer treatment to aid in improving turf health this autumn.

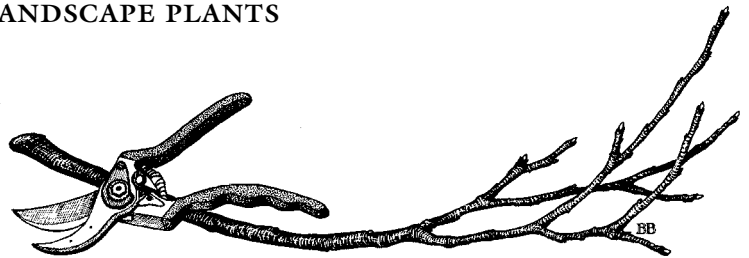
Any energy stored by the sprouting grass in late October and November will be used to repair and establish a healthy root system prior to winter, resulting in a better spring green up. A high calcium lime treatment will aid in softening the soil itself while adjusting soil pH into a desirable range for the new and existing turf. Core aeration is an excellent tool to reduce compacted soil, perhaps even those with some remaining sediment as a coating on the surface of the lawn. These situations can be further improved by over seeding once the lawn is aerated with a superior blend of turf grass. See 'Winterizer' blog post at [mrgrassblog.net](http://mrgrassblog.net).

Most lawns can be seeded well into late October and still have some germination prior to winter in a normal growing season. Although you will not see a whole lot going on, taking the shot now is still normally worth the gamble of an early snow. I have seen great lawns emerge in the spring from a late seeding and in the case of this catastrophe, I think the 'doing' outweighs the 'waiting' in most cases.

## TREES, INCLUDING SHRUBS AND OTHER LANDSCAPE PLANTS

Flooding can harm trees in several ways:

- Undermining root systems by washing away the soil
- Depriving roots of oxygen by soil saturation
- Depriving roots of oxygen by depositing sediment
- Carrying toxic contaminants
- Causing stem wounds from fast moving debris



### WHAT SHOULD YOU DO? .....

**1] Determine whether the tree has become hazardous.** Trees with seriously undermined roots are at risk of blowing over in future storms. If their location puts people or property at risk, they should be removed. Trees with significant trunk or root collar injuries should also be evaluated for hazard, since the point of injury will become a weak spot as the wood underneath decays.

**2] Restore original soil conditions.** Gently remove excess soil deposits over the roots, which extend about as far

from the trunk as the branches. Cover newly exposed roots, but don't overdo it. A thin covering of soil and/or 2-4" of mulch is enough.

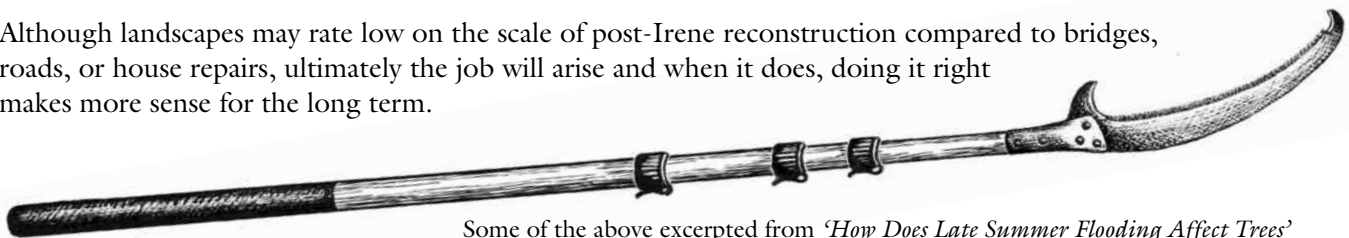
**3] Remove dirt from leaves and branches.** Releasing mud-caked branches gives them a better chance of recovery. Although a thin coating of dirt is unlikely to affect deciduous trees whose leaves will soon be completely shed, conifers may benefit if dirt is hosed off.

**4] Prune broken branches.** Those branches broken by water or wind should be pruned to minimize bark tearing and future decay.

**5] Small uprooted trees can be reset if their roots have not dried out.** Keep trees watered through the fall, as if they were newly planted trees, right up until the ground freezes.

**6] Wait.** Don't rush to conclusions unless trees are hazardous to people or property. Some trees will decline over several years but many will recover.

Although landscapes may rate low on the scale of post-Irene reconstruction compared to bridges, roads, or house repairs, ultimately the job will arise and when it does, doing it right makes more sense for the long term.



Some of the above excerpted from 'How Does Late Summer Flooding Affect Trees' by VT Forest Health, courtesy of the VT Department of Forest, Parks and Recreation.

## chippers

Concord 603.225.9600  
Lebanon 603.448.4800  
Meredith 603.279.7400  
New London 603.526.4500  
Woodstock 802.457.5100

[chippersinc.com](http://chippersinc.com)

 **GREENWORDS**  
is provided free of charge to anyone who loves plants. If you know someone who might enjoy this publication, have them call us at 866.683.6222. Current and past issues are available at our website.

Editor: Mundy Wilson  
Contributors: Theron Peck & Cal Felicetti  
Design: Edie Crocker  
Original Illustrations: Betsy Brigham  
Printing: Spaulding Press



**Help us be Green:** If you are receiving this newsletter in error, or wish to be removed from our mailing list, please call toll free: 866.683.6222.

Accredited: NH Better Business Bureau, A+ Rating & TCIA



## The Benefits of Performing Winter Tree & Enhancement Work

OK so many of us are definitely not ready yet, but every living creature in our area knows it is coming: Winter. Love it or not, want it or not, it's coming, and we all can feel it in our bones. Chippers works all winter long in part because there are so many benefits to having tree and enhancement services performed during this season.

This year we are trying to plan our winter work schedule way ahead to gage our employment needs, and we want to encourage you to do the same by offering you a special incentive. Schedule your winter work before December 1, 2011 for 10% discount on work performed January 1 to March 31, 2012, and we will also donate \$50 per Crew Day to the Irene flood relief efforts via either the VT or NH Foodbank, based on where you live. Accounts that are prepaid by December 1, 2011 for winter services will have a 15% total discount applied.\*

### MORE REASONS WHY WINTER IS A GREAT TIME FOR THIS KIND OF WORK:

**1] Improve Your View:** Enhancement work during the dormant season is ideal when leaves aren't blocking the vista potential.

**2] Your Lawn will Thank You:** Frozen ground allows large equipment to access your site while minimizing damage to lawns, gardens and the forest floor.

**3] Prevent Distress:** Cold weather prevents the spread of tree disease as well as minimizes shock due to leaf loss.

**4] Timing is Everything:** February and March are preferred times for orchard and fruit tree pruning, and for many other species.

**5] Peace of Mind:** Know your trees and shrubs are prepared for fast re-growth during the coming spring, no matter what Mother Nature brings.

**6] Prior Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance:** Allows you to

begin other spring landscaping projects earlier.

**7] Seeing is Believing:** Identify potential hazards or problems while the entire woody structure of deciduous trees is visible without leaves.

**8] Walk or Talk:** Discuss your 2012 goals and plans for your landscape with your representative, either via email, phone, or on site, your place or ours—we love clients to visit either of our Upper Valley locations for a cup of coffee and chat!

**9] Our Time is Yours:** Take advantage of more flexible scheduling and less hectic work pace.

**10] Outstanding Value:** Enjoy off-season rates and contribute to a worthy local cause while enjoying the same Chippers commitment to the highest quality and service.

\*A 'Crew Day' will be determined per project by your representative, based on crew needs to perform the desired work. This price reduction does not apply to snow removal services.

FEATURED WRITER:  
**Calvin Coolidge**  
(1872-1933, 30th President of the United States)



Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'press on' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race.

## Chippers Training Winter 2012

**We are planning to offer a green care educational series** in February and March on topics related to tree & turf care, gardening, forest management, etc.

What horticultural or arboricultural things would you like to learn about while the ground is still frozen?

Drop us an email: [training@chippersinc.com](mailto:training@chippersinc.com), or visit our Facebook Page – Chippers Inc. to let us know!



*Our Chippers Team 'Will Power' participated in the 2011 Prouty Campaign—some of us by driving support vehicles, some by biking, and some by hiking. Thanks to all who helped The Prouty exceed this year's goal to raise funds for cancer research.*

### Are you interested in donating directly to assist in tropical storm Irene recovery efforts?

Call 1-800-VERMONT to donate to either the Vermont Disaster Relief Fund or to the Vermont-New Hampshire Red Cross Chapter.

## FALL/WINTER Check List

- Schedule fall/winter tree service
- Arrange for a storm prevention audit
- Plan deer protection
- Rake and remove or mulch leaves
- Cable and brace trees to minimize storm damage
- Schedule anti-dessicant applications for injury-susceptible evergreens
- Prune evergreen branches for indoor winter decoration
- Remove dead and damaged limbs from trees with maintenance pruning
- Protect roses and other sensitive shrubs with burlap screens
- Remove heavy snow from trees and shrubs after storms
- Prune fruit trees in late winter

*For Storm Damage Assistance,  
please call: 866.683.6222*

## Stay in Touch!

WEBSITE: [chippersinc.com](http://chippersinc.com)

BLOGS: [thisoldyard.net](http://thisoldyard.net) for green care,  
[mrgrassblog.net](http://mrgrassblog.net) for turf and soil

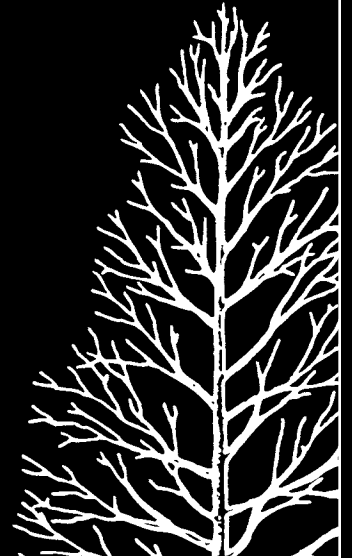
FACEBOOK:

Our page is "Chippers Inc."

EMAIL NEWS: *Green Care Tips* are sent monthly with timely tips, offers and advice—register at our website. You can opt out at any time and we never, ever share your information with anyone else.

*We look forward to hearing from you!*

*"I prefer winter and fall, when you feel the bone structure of the landscape—the loneliness of it, the dead feeling of winter. Something waits beneath it, the whole story doesn't show."* — ANDREW WYETH



*Enhancing Your Outdoor Living Spaces*

1241 Pomfret Road  
Woodstock, VT 05091

