

Personal Message

If it's March, then it must be spring, right? At least, we're getting one step closer to warmer weather. Remember how frigid the temperatures were this past winter? It was especially cold and windy around the New Years holiday.

Now, as we get those tempting hints of spring, it gets harder to wait until the weather warms up and we can get back outside.

As Melissa and I look out our kitchen window, we now see two raised garden beds that I recently built. We'll use them for vegetables and for temporary plant storage, if necessary.

The beds are about two feet high and are rectangular in shape. They're only 8 feet across, so we can reach to the center from each side.

I'll tell you why we now have two raised beds. Last year, when my parents moved, we picked up the lumber, scooped up the soil and moved the entire garden from their house to mine.

My parents' new home has six raised gardens, so they certainly didn't need any more. Melissa was ecstatic to have another garden that she can use without having to bend over. And, I'll be extremely happy with the extra produce that is promised to me.

We'll add additional pelletized compost to the soil before we plant this year. This is the most amazing stuff you've ever used. It provides the same nutrients for the soil as traditional compost, but without the mess and odor.

We use it on lawns, in landscape beds and obviously, in our own gardens. Be sure to let me know if you're interested in trying some. We'll be happy to provide you with a free sample that you can use in a potted plant or a small outdoor area.

By now, you've probably received several pieces of mail from us about our natural/organic lawn care program. We're beginning our 8th year of lawn installation service.

The program has been refined and developed over the years as we've proven you can have a beautiful lawn without the use of dangerous, harsh chemicals. We use basic cultural practices and organic products during our five annual treatments to produce results. Please give us a call for a no-cost estimate.

And, don't forget that you can receive this newsletter each month at no charge. Just go to our website, dellsadler.com, and sign up for your complimentary copy. It's full of information about our company and about gardening on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

March Garden Tips

- March is an uncertain time for the garden. Will it warm up soon? Will it *stay* warm? So, this month, preparation is key. Clean up matted leaves and dead vegetation from flower beds and lawns. Having the soil rototilled (when soil is dry) will break up winter compaction and allow the soil to breathe. Taking time to fluff the mulch will also relieve compaction and allows air and light to penetrate the soil. Fluffing the mulch makes it appear as if it's been freshly applied. You may not need to add fresh mulch this year.
- St. Patrick's Day is the traditional time to plant peas and potatoes, but you may have to wait a few weeks until the ground dries out unless you prepared the soil last fall. Rhubarb, asparagus, and onion sets can also be planted now.
- If you don't trust the weatherman's predictions of warm spring weather, hardy annuals, such as pansies, can handle the last remnants of the winter chill and any danger of frost. They will take you through the transition season of spring into the riotous color of summer annuals.

Eye-Opening Lawn Care Facts

We've run across some interesting statistics about natural/organic lawn care. As you probably have guessed by now, it's a subject that's near and dear to our hearts.

According to the National Wildlife Federation, lawns do more than make your yard look good. Lawns help to absorb water. This reduces storm runoff and improves water quality.

Lawns also have a cooling effect. Grass provides oxygen, traps dust and dirt and promotes healthful microorganisms. Not to mention the fact that a beautiful lawn increases property values tremendously. A whopping 80% of U.S. households have a lawn of some shape size (or color). Collectively, we spend over \$40 billion dollars on our lawns and this figure is increasing. That's a lot of green!

Here's More:

- The size of the average American lawn is 1/3 of an acre.
- The smallest lawns are found in Washington, DC at 0.06 acre and range to the largest in the state of Georgia at 0.51 acre.
- Approximately 50 million Americans actively maintain their lawn, either doing the work themselves or using a service.
- 30 % of all water used on the East Coast is used to water lawns. That figure jumps to 60% on the West Coast.
- In suburbia, the average acre of grass receives 10 times the amount of chemical pesticide that the average farmland acre receives.
- The yard waste that goes into the average landfill accounts for 18% of the total solid waste tonnage.
- Over 70 million tons of fertilizers and pesticides are applied to lawns every year.
- A gasoline-powered lawnmower emits 10-12 times more hydrocarbons into the atmosphere than a typical car for each hour it runs. A weedeater emits 21 times more each hour and a leaf blower 34 times more.

We found these statistics eye-opening. As regular readers of our newsletters know, we love to share information about lawns and lawn care.

Our 8 year old program will provide you with a lush healthy lawn that is not dependent on synthetic chemicals. We have proven results with our 80% non-toxic program.

A healthy lawn is naturally resistant to disease, insects and weeds. Please give us a call for further information. We'll provide you with a no-cost estimate of our program.

On Another Note...

For the past four years, we've been offering a barrier tick repellent spray. And, for the past four years, we have received nothing but positive comments about its effectiveness.

It all began after I suffered complications from a tick bite. I was hospitalized for several days and took antibiotics for about a month.

Then, last year, Dad developed Lyme Disease. He was in the hospital for three weeks and we almost lost him. It was too close for comfort.

Of course you know that I'm a landscaper. Before he retired, Dad was a tree surgeon. Both of us worked outdoors for most of our lives. And, both of us know a lot about tick habitats and how to safely remove a tick. The point is that if we can suffer from a bite, you may be bitten and not even know about it.

This is why I developed a tick repellent program and modified it into one of the most effective means of protection against ticks that is available.

In addition to the barrier tick spray which is extremely effective, we also use Damminix tubes around your property.

They look like a cardboard tube from a roll of paper towels. However, they're an extremely effective tool in the fight against ticks.

Inside the tube, small cotton balls have been treated with tick repellent. Mice and squirrels love the cotton batting. They take tiny pieces away to build and restore their nests.

The cotton is treated with a poison called permethrin. It is not harmful to mammals or rodents.

However, it's deadly to the tick population. As deer ticks feed on mice and squirrels, they ingest the permethrin poison. And, they die off very quickly. So, it's possible to have a beautiful wooded area or even a wood pile fairly close to the house without ticks.

We generally recommend placing the Damminix tick tubes in these areas. One tube will cover a fairly wide space, so we estimate the number of tubes, based on your property.

Tubes are most effective when used in conjunction with the barrier tick spray.

We offer a no-cost, no-obligation inspection of your property. This allows us to identify the areas of activity and recommend a course of action for you.