



# RICE'S

LANDSCAPES REDEFINED

PLANT, LAWN & LANDSCAPE FEATURE CARE GUIDE

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## ESTATE LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

We invite you to experience landscapes redefined. Enjoy your landscape year-round while we proactively manage your property.



## COMMERCIAL GROUNDS SERVICES

Your business deserves a great first impression! Our account managers are committed to being your proactive landscape solution and delivering excellent service.



## CUSTOM DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

Your dream landscape becomes a reality as our award-winning architects, designers, and construction team members capture your vision in living color.



# WATERING INSTRUCTIONS

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## TREES & SHRUBS

The roots of trees and shrubs must not dry out completely. This is especially the case during the first growing season since such stress may kill the plant.

Your plants are generally installed in a combination of on-site soil, topsoil, and planting mix. This is considered a light soil and, on average, should be watered as follows:\*

April 15 – May 15	1x/week
May 16 – September 15	2x/week**
September 16 – October 31	1x/week

Follow up with a thorough final watering in the middle of November. This will ensure the plant has adequate moisture to sustain itself through the winter months.

To properly water trees and shrubs, remove any nozzles and place the hose on the ground approximately 6 inches from the stem or trunk. Water flow should be a small stream about ¼ inch in diameter (it should take about 5 seconds to fill a coffee cup). Shift the hose around to ensure even watering. Duration depends on plant size. Approximate watering times are:\*

Small to medium shrub	1-2 minutes
Large shrub	2-3 minutes
Evergreen & deciduous tree	20 minutes

*\*The suggested watering frequency and duration are all starting points. Frequency, duration, and process should all be adjusted depending on weather conditions.*

*\*\*During hot, dry summers (multiple days above 90° F), watering should be increased to 3 to 4 times a week.*

## EXPERT TIPS

- Please note that plants can easily be overwatered, suffocating the roots and killing them.
- Soaker hoses are another watering option that run off your spigot(s). They should be installed in runs of less than 100 linear feet. If more are required, create multiple runs. On average, run soaker hoses for 30 to 90 minutes depending on the output of your soaker hose.
- Check the soil after the first few waterings to determine if the method or timing needs adjusted. It is important to routinely check if plant materials need more or less watering throughout the growing season.
- Avoid shooting jets of water directly at a plant. This can damage a plant, potentially causing it to defoliate. Water spots on foliage subject to direct sunlight may cause burn marks on the plant.
- **Please note: Your failure to appropriately water any plant materials will void your warranty.**
- For tips on watering your newly seeded or sodded lawn, see page 8.

## PERENNIALS/GROUNDCOVER/ANNUALS

A light watering every other morning is recommended for these plant materials because most are shallow rooted. Use a nozzle or long-stemmed watering wand to gently yet thoroughly wet the perennial, groundcover, and/or annual plant bed almost to the point of run off. Typically 5 to 10 seconds per plant. You may need to return to each plant multiple times for adequate watering.

## DETERMINING WATERING DEPTH

Watering patterns should be adjusted based on the rainfall received throughout the growing season. Most plants require about an inch of rainfall per week during establishment. Keep in mind, the majority of heavy rain will run off and not be absorbed into the soil.

To determine if watering is required, check the soil near the base of the plant to a depth of 2 to 3 inches by taking your index finger or a piece of metal hanger wire and pressing it into the soil to this depth.

- The plant has been properly watered if the soil feels moist with a small amount clinging to your finger or the wire.
- If the soil is loose and muddy (about the consistency of pudding) the plant is getting too much water.
- If the soil feels dry and is difficult to penetrate, follow the recommended watering methods immediately.

# IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

Irrigation systems make watering landscapes easier, more efficient, and less time consuming. They are installed in zones (a group of irrigation heads or emitters) that are generally separated into 2 to 3 categories: planting bed, seasonal container, and lawn zones. Due to site variations and fluctuating weather conditions, there are no true 'set it and forget it' irrigation settings. The times listed below are guidelines and should be adjusted according to your specific landscape needs. Under certain conditions, weekly adjustments may be necessary.

## SPRINKLER DEVICES

There are 3 main sprinkler devices that can be used in a sprinkler system.

1. **Rotors:** shoot a direct stream
2. **Sprays:** spray a fan-like pattern
3. **Low Volume Emitters:** saturates the soil, commonly called a drip tube

## ZONES & RUN TIMES

**Rotor Zone:** 12 to 30 minutes depending on the amount of shade, soil conditions, and drainage.

**Spray Zones:** 5 to 15 minutes depending on the amount of shade, soil conditions, and drainage.

**Low Volume Emitters:** 30 to 90 minutes depending of the amount of shade, soil conditions, drainage, and the length of the runs.

## SEASONAL ADJUSTMENTS

Rice's recommends using the seasonal adjustment feature on the controller to make needed adjustments for the various seasons to avoid both underwatering and overwatering plants and lawns. The following recommendations are for established plants—those older than 2 years. Newer plantings require much more frequent watering.

LAWN ZONES		
MONTH	SEASONAL ADJUST	SUGGESTED WEEKLY CYCLE
January	Timer off	Off
February	Timer off	Off
March	Timer off	Off
April	70%	Once every 4 days*
May	100%	Once every 4 days
June	100%	Once every 3 days
July	175%	Once every 3 days
August	175%	Once every 3 days
September	100%	Once every 4 days
October	70%	Once every 4 days*
November	Timer off	Off
December	Timer off	Off

*\*weather dependent*

BED ZONES		
MONTH	SEASONAL ADJUST	SUGGESTED WEEKLY CYCLE
January	Timer off	Off
February	Timer off	Off
March	Timer off	Off
April	100%	Once every 7 days*
May	100%	Once every 7 days
June	100%	Once every 4 days
July	175%	Once every 4 days
August	175%	Once every 4 days
September	100%	Once every 4 days
October	100%	Once every 7 days*
November	Timer off	Off
December	Timer off	Off

*\*weather dependent*

## WINTERIZATION

Rice's recommends that irrigation systems get blown out in the fall to remove the majority of the water before temperatures get below freezing. This ensures that the small amount of water that remains has adequate room to expand when it freezes without causing pipes to break. If a system does not get blown out, the remaining water will not have enough room to expand, causing pipes to rupture and leading to costly repairs. If you intend to winterize your irrigation system yourself, use an air compressor set to 50 to 70 psi. Please note: The smaller the air compressor tank size, the longer this process will take.

Systems that are blown out in the fall will need checked and restarted in the spring once temperatures stay above freezing.

# NEW/REPAIRED LAWN CARE

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## WATERING

**Seeded lawn:** A seeded lawn should be watered daily. A seeded lawn installed in the summer will require more frequent watering than one installed in the spring or fall. Once watering has started, it should not be interrupted until the lawn has been adequately established.

**Sodded lawn:** Immediately begin watering your sodded lawn. It is critical that watering be done at least twice per day until the roots have established. After approximately 2 to 3 weeks, a reduced watering schedule can be established.

During the first three-week establishment period, seeded and sodded lawns should be kept evenly moist but not muddy. Water seeded lawns for approximately 9 to 12 minutes 1 to 2 times every day for the first two weeks and 1 to 2 times every other day for the third week. Water long enough to allow a 1 to 2 inch moisture depth for seed germination. Water sodded lawns 2 times per day for the first 2 to 3 weeks, watering long enough for a 3 inch moisture depth. (See how to determine water depth on page 6 of this care guide.) After the third week, water with less frequency while maintaining the same depth of watering.

Adjust your watering pattern if the ground appears to dry out, the grass starts to turn yellow or brown, and/or there is considerable rainfall.

Please note: Your lawn may show the above signs of stress from heat or malnutrition even months after establishment. Proper lawn care, especially seasonal fertilization and continual watering, is vital to maintaining a healthy lawn.

## STRAW AND STRAW NETTING CARE

Seeded lawn installations include a topdressing of straw or, more often, straw netting. This topdressing helps combat natural elements, such as wind, water, and animals, that can shift seeds and may lead to bare patches. It also retains moisture, helping to prevent your seedlings from drying out. Straw netting is preferred over straw because it is held to the ground with sod staples, making it unlikely to blow away in heavy wind.

Little care is needed for either material. Straw will decompose on its own, as will straw netting as it is photo-biodegradable, meaning sunlight will break it down over time. Do not remove your straw netting, as this could tear up new grass seedlings and damage your yard. If you notice any areas where the netting has come loose, use a box cutter to remove the raised areas as these could pose a hazard when mowing. It is also acceptable to leave sod staples in your yard as they are thin and easily covered by your new lawn.

## MOWING

**Seeded lawn:** A newly seeded lawn should not be mowed until it reaches a height of at least 3 inches.

**Sodded lawn:** Do not mow a sodded lawn until it has roots and is established, about 3 to 4 weeks. Test this by tugging gently on the sod. When you feel resistance from the roots, it is beginning to become established.

Mowing of new or repaired lawn areas should be done only after the lawn has been given adequate time to dry out and firm up.

# MOWING INSTRUCTIONS

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## TIPS FROM THE PROFESSIONAL

- Proper mowing increases the density of the lawn, which, in turn, prevents weeds.
- Mowing should be done after the lawn has been given adequate time to dry out and firm up.
- Decide which direction to mow open areas. For the best look, either mow parallel to the road or driveway, or diagonal to those features. For each subsequent mowing, mow perpendicular to the direction mowed previously.
- Edge beds, driveways, patios, and sidewalks on a weekly to bi-weekly basis by running a string trimmer vertically along edges.
- Mow all grass clippings away from mulch beds, structures, vehicles, and tree rings.
- Severe weather conditions can stress your lawn and affect growth rates. Adjust your mowing schedule accordingly.
- When mowing, no more than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the grass blade should be removed at any one time. Most lawns are a combination of several grass types and should be mowed whenever the grass reaches a height of 3 to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches. A cutting height of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches is recommended.
- Sharpen your mower blades frequently to avoid tearing tender grass blades.

## MOWER SIZE

Riding mowers offer convenience, but take care not to make sharp turns as mower tires will tear up the lawn, especially in wet or extremely dry conditions. Always exercise caution when using a riding mower and do not use them on extreme hillsides.

Push mowers are the better choice for curbed islands, wet areas, extreme hillsides, and detail work.

## TO BAG OR NOT TO BAG

Rice's recommends using a mulching mower blade and leaving grass clippings on the lawn so long as they are cut fine enough to drop into the lawn out of sight. Clippings do not contribute to thatch and, in fact, help replenish nutrients into your lawn. Only remove clippings if they clump and sit on top of the grass as this deprives your lawn of sunlight and will lead to browning.

Bagging clippings is recommended in small areas such as around windows, vehicles, swimming pools, or other potential hazards; in wet areas where the grass is prone to clumping; and when grass has overgrown.

## BE SAFE

Always wear proper shoes and personal protective equipment when operating mowing machinery.



# FERTILIZING

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## LAWNS

As part of a typical seeded lawn installation, Rice's includes an overseeding and fertilizing within 4 to 6 weeks of installation.

Additional fertilizing should be done every 6 to 8 weeks during the first growing season with an all-purpose lawn fertilizer. Avoid using a weed-and-feed until after the sixth mowing.

**Early spring:** Crabgrass preventer (*unless you intend to overseed your lawn*)

**Summer through fall:** Slow-release, high-nitrogen fertilizer\* with a post emergent weed killer every 90 to 120 days

Plan to apply your fertilizer the day before the forecast is calling for steady rain. Otherwise, you will need to water the lawn immediately after the fertilizer application (unless it is a weed-and-feed, see the package for instructions). This helps dissolve and dilute the fertilizer and prevents it from burning the lawn. Follow the directions on the fertilizer bag and familiarize yourself with your spreader for best results.

*\*Do not use a heavy nitrogen fertilizer during periods of extreme heat and avoid spreading at a full rate during stress conditions (such as drought). Too much fertilizer will cause your lawn to burn out.*



## TREES & SHRUBS

Trees and shrubs should receive fertilizer during times of active root growth and adequate soil moisture, typically starting in early spring. Fertilizer should not be applied during times of drought as plants will be unable to absorb the nutrients. Do not over-fertilize and follow the fertilizer manufacturer's instructions.

**For shade, ornamental, and evergreen trees,** fertilize in the early spring after the soil is thawed but before growth begins.

**For acid-loving rhododendrons, azaleas, and holly,** apply an acidifying fertilizer for optimal blooming and color.

**For non-acid loving plants,** use a fertilizer made specifically for more alkaline plants.

## PERENNIALS/GROUNDCOVERS

Newly installed perennials and groundcovers should be fertilized once during the growing season. A good all-around flower or garden fertilizer can be found at your local retail store.

For established perennials and groundcovers, Rice's recommends the following fertilization schedule:

**1st Application:** Early spring while plants are dormant

**2nd Application:** Six weeks after the first application

**3rd Application:** Mid- to late-summer

For the best results, fertilize before plants begin showing signs of nutrient deficiencies such as poor growth or yellowing leaves even though sufficient watering is taking place.

## ANNUALS

Annuals need fed regularly during their short growing season. Granular or liquid fertilizers are available at your local retail store to encourage good reblooming and growth.

# WEED CONTROL & MULCHING

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## LAWNS

Apply crabgrass preventer in the spring avoiding any newly seeded lawn areas until after the seed has germinated and is growing. Broadleaf weed control should not be applied until after the sixth mowing.

If possible, granular weed control should be applied during morning hours while grass is damp with dew.

Liquid weed control for broadleaf weeds should be applied as needed following manufacturer's instructions.

## PLANTING BEDS

### (Shrubs, Groundcovers, Flowers)

Determine the best product for your situation.

Pre-emergents are best applied in the early spring to prevent annual weeds from germinating. A granular pre-emergent broadleaf weed control should be applied between early April and the first of May, or after a new planting installation when the soil and mulch are freshly disturbed.

Small weeds should be sprayed using a liquid post emergent weed control and following manufacturer's instructions.

For weeds above 4 inches tall, pull them by using a hand tool to dig up the root. Take care to dig up as much of the root as possible. Leaving roots behind may allow the weed to regenerate itself.

## MULCH

Decorative mulches serve many purposes, including inhibiting weed growth, helping trees and plants retain moisture, insulating roots from extreme weather conditions, and providing a uniform, clean appearance.

Rice's recommends top dressing all existing plant beds with about 1 inch of bark mulch on a yearly basis to maintain a consistent mulch depth. This should sufficiently prevent weeds from spreading when used in combination with a pre-emergent weed control. The mulch should taper in depth from 2 to 3 inches to just enough to cover the root zone below the tree or plant. Avoid allowing mulch to come into contact with trunks, stems, and branches.

As bark mulch decomposes, it adds a rich compost to your tree and plant beds. It also serves to conserve moisture. Please note: Even this type of mulch can build up if not exposed to rainfall. If this occurs, use a flat rake to remove any areas of build-up.

Avoid mulches that consist of artificially colored ground up wood and scrap pallets. These types of mulches do not decompose as quickly and build up thick layers in plant beds, suffocating root systems and depriving them of adequate moisture.

# PEST CONTROL

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## INSECTS

All of Rice's trees, plants, groundcovers, and flowers are state inspected. However, pests may become a problem after installation if they are in the vicinity. Certain preventative measures can be taken to eliminate potential pest problems or alleviate them once they appear. Please note: Superficial blemishes on leaf surfaces, edges, or bark are typically not harmful to plants nor require treatment.

Spraying horticultural oil on trees and shrubs in early spring before growth begins but when the temperatures remain consistently above 45° F will eliminate scale, mites, and other overwintering insects. Spray again two weeks later and following manufacturer's instructions. Scale-infested plants should be sprayed again in late spring (May/June) to control any scale that may be hatching.

For more information about pest control including helpful tips and tricks, visit [buckeyegardening.com](http://buckeyegardening.com), and always follow manufacturer's instructions.



## ANIMAL/RODENT

If animals such as deer, rabbits, or groundhogs are prevalent in your area, we recommend treating your plants with an animal/rodent repellent spray in mid-to late-December to prevent animals from feeding on your landscape investment.

Creating a physical barrier such as a burlap or silt fence around the base of your trees and shrubs can be effective. Or consider using one of the ultrasonic and electric products currently on the market.

## GRUB CONTROL

Another method to discourage rodents is to remove their food supply. Grubs live in lawns and planting beds and are a food source for moles, voles, skunks, birds, and raccoons. There are several granular and liquid grub prevention products on the market. Optimal application dates vary by product but are usually between April to July 15. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for best results.

# PRUNING

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Proper pruning is an important part of landscape maintenance. Not only does pruning shape a plant for aesthetic purposes, it also provides a means to control growth and eliminate structural problems such as overlapping or crossed branches.

## PRUNING TECHNIQUES

### SIMPLE PRUNING RULES

- Clean, inspect, and sharpen all pruning tools before use. Scour your tools with a natural cleaning powder such as baking soda or a scrubbing cleanser. Rinse your tools thoroughly before drying with a clean rag. Wipe blades with vegetable or grapeseed oil to keep their mechanics lubricated.
- Select the proper tool for the job. Take care not to strain yourself nor the tool you are using.
  - Hand pruners:** Perennials and twig stalks less than 1 inch in diameter.
  - Loppers:** Branches over 1" in diameter.
  - Hedge shears:** Shaping bushes and shrubs.
  - Hand saw:** Various purposes, larger shrubs and tree branches.
- Have a definite goal in mind before you start. Step back often to view the plant for desired appearance.
- Prune a little at a time until the desired effect is achieved.
- Prune close to the trunk or branch and try not to leave stubs.
- Make cuts at a 45° angle ½ inch above a bud. When buds are directly opposite on shrubs, cut straight across ½ inch above the base of the buds.

### CLEANING

Remove branches that are dead, dying, diseased, crowded, or broken using hand pruners, pole pruners, loppers, and/or hand saws.

### THINNING

Remove select branches to increase light and air movement, and to help decrease weight on heavy branches. The natural form of the tree or shrub is retained when performed properly. Hand pruners, loppers, and hand saws are recommended for this method. This method is sometimes referred to as insert pruning.



## TIMING

### SPRING & EARLY SUMMER FLOWERING PLANTS

Spring and early summer flowering plants bloom on the previous season's bud growth. Therefore, do not prune these plants until after heavy flowering is over and avoid pruning them in the fall. This will allow new growth to harden off and develop flowerbuds for the following spring. Rice's Estate Landscape Maintenance clients should note that we will occasionally prune these plants before bloom time in a very selective fashion to improve shape, health, and control size. Your Account Manager will discuss with you if this pruning is acceptable.

### LATE SUMMER & AUTUMN FLOWERING PLANTS

Late summer and autumn flowering plants bloom on the current season's growth. These plants prefer to be pruned in the late fall after flowering, or early winter.

### REPEAT BLOOMERS

Some varieties of shrubs have been hybridized to bloom continuously from both current and last season's growth. Pruning is recommended for these varieties to control shape after their prime blooming period is over.

# PAVERS & NATURAL STONE

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## NEW INSTALLATION

Concrete, clay, and natural stone pavers (bluestone, sandstone, limestone) require minimal maintenance to provide you with years of enjoyment of your patio, sidewalk, or driveway.

Within the first month after installation, you may notice some sand residue on the paver surface or a small amount of settling in the paver joints. This is normal. Settling in the joints may be corrected by adding some of the same jointing sand that was used on the original installation (polymeric sand or gator dust are the most commonly used). This could take more than one application, but is not typical.

*NOTE: Polymeric sand is typically used with joints no larger than one inch. Gator dust is also a type of polymeric jointing sand used with joints one inch or larger. Please note: Both kinds of jointing sand require a very specific application process. If the process is not followed, damage to the pavers is possible. Also, any type of jointing sand will require some maintenance after installation due to Ohio's freeze/thaw cycle.*

## SNOW REMOVAL & DE-ICING

To remove snow from your pavers, use a plastic shovel or plastic blade protectors on your snow plow or blower.

Please note: Any de-icing product has the potential to damage paver material. However, if you do plan to de-icer your pavers, two types of products are recommended:

- Sodium Chloride (NaCl) – for use in temperatures down to 20° F
- Calcium Chloride (CaCl<sub>2</sub>) – for use in temperatures between 20° F to -2° F

Other recommendations when using de-icing products:

- Use the minimum amount to melt the snow and ice.
- Excess de-icer should be swept up and removed.
- Avoid rock salt or magnesium-based products as they are very aggressive and will cause damage to hardscape surfaces.

## ROUTINE MAINTENANCE & CLEANING

Concrete and clay pavers are porous and, along with natural stone, can be stained and/or weathered with age. Routine sweeping is recommended, especially in high traffic areas. If a deeper clean is desired, you may need to carefully use a pressure washer.

There are a few general guidelines when pressure washing your patio. Do NOT use the high power nozzle setting/attachment with your pressure washer as this will etch the surface. Always keep the nozzle at an angle and at least 12 inches away from the surface, using the fan nozzle setting/attachment. Be gentle around joints so as not to dislodge too much jointing sand.

Cleaning solutions are another option for cleaning your patio. Check your local retail store for general cleaning solutions and specialized ones designed for oil and grease or efflorescence. A mixture of 20% dish soap to 80% water applied with a soft bristle brush can also be used. Always be gentle with the jointing sand. Do NOT use a wire brush as pieces of wire can become dislodged promoting rust and/or scratch the paver surface.

With either process, re-applying jointing sand could be required once the surface and joints are *completely* dry.

Please note: Cleanliness and color rejuvenation are not guaranteed through any process. The age of your product can affect the color.

## SEALING

For most paver and natural stone products, sealing the surface is NOT recommended. Pre-cast manufactured pavers such as Unilock can be sealed to enhance or deepen the color, but this is not necessary. Please note: Once you choose to seal the pavers, you will need to reapply the sealer following the manufacturer's recommendations.

## WEED PREVENTION & TREATMENT

The best way to prevent weed growth is to use polymeric sand between paver joints. However, not all dry laid pavers have polymeric sand joints. In this instance, a pre- or post emergent herbicide is recommended for weed control. Test a small area of the paver to ensure it does not stain and always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

# LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES

## DECKS, FENCES, ARBORS, PERGOLAS, GATES, ENTRY FEATURES

Any of the above landscape features can be constructed of Azek/Timber Tech, cedar, vinyl, or aluminum, each with their own suggested maintenance methods. Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations. This information should be used as a general guideline only.

### AZEK/TIMBER TECH DECKING

To clean an Azek or Timber Tech deck, follow the manufacturer's cleaning and care instructions. It is also recommended you first test any cleaner on an inconspicuous area to make sure it does not harm the surface.

- Do NOT use abrasive cleaners as they can dull the surface of new deck boards.
- Always clean smaller, manageable areas and rinse often. Do NOT allow cleaner or soap residue to dry to the surface before thoroughly rinsing.
- Do NOT use composite deck cleaners on Azek/Timber Tech decking. These products are a polymer and not a wood/plastic composite.

### AZEK TRIM

**For non-painted surfaces:** To clean Azek trim, use a pressure washer held at an angle and at least 12 inches away from the surface using the fan nozzle setting/attachment. Test the setting to ensure it will not damage the board surface. A medium nylon bristle brush can be used if the board is not coming clean through pressure washing alone.

**For painted surfaces:** Consult with your paint manufacturer for instructions on cleaning painted trim.



### CEDAR

Any exposed cedar, if left untreated, will weather to a gray color with age. Rice's recommends using a good quality wood cleaner on a regular basis following the manufacturer's instructions. Take care not to scrub over the wood as excessive scrubbing could scratch the surface. Follow the wood cleaner with a plain water wipe down. Use a rag to sop up any excess water and allow the wood to dry.

To maintain the beauty of the wood and to minimize warping, cracking, and splitting, we recommend you also apply a water-repellent sealer. These items can be purchased at a local retail store and follow the directions on the container.

### VINYL

Vinyl structures, especially white ones, can benefit from once yearly cleaning. Using a nylon bristle brush and a garden hose, gently scrub and rinse to get rid of loose dirt. For heavier dirt, use a simple cleaning solution with a soft brush and/or cloth while being sure to follow any manufacturer's recommendations. Always test any cleaning solutions on an inconspicuous section of vinyl to ensure it will not damage your structure.

### ALUMINUM

Keeping aluminum structures clean is as simple as giving it a quick hose-down. In the case of stubborn dirt and debris, use a mixture of water and dish soap applied with a non-abrasive sponge. Then rinse and allow the structure to dry. For best results, clean aluminum structures on a cool, overcast day and do not allow the soap mixture to dry on the structure. Always be sure to follow the manufacturer's recommendations to avoid inadvertently damaging your structure.

# FOUNTAIN & PRE-CAST CARE

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Please note that proper winter care is required for all cast stone products. Proper maintenance is necessary to protect your product from the freeze-thaw cycles that occur in the winter. Anything that can hold water, snow, or ice such as a fountain, planter, birdbath top, and anything that sits directly on the ground, such as a statue, birdbath base, planter, or bench leg can also be damaged. To minimize possible winter damage, please follow the suggestions listed below.

## CONCRETE & GLAZED PLANTERS

If a planter is to be left planted over the winter, it should be raised up off the ground by placing two pressure treated wood strips beneath it, while ensuring drainage holes are not blocked. This will allow the soil to drain and prevent the planter from freezing to the ground. If a planter sits directly on the ground through several freeze-thaw cycles, proper soil drainage may be blocked leading to soil expansion and a cracked, crumbling, or flaking planter.

If a planter is not to be planted over the winter, we suggest storing it in a garage/shed or on a covered porch away from the elements.

If an unplanted planter is to be left outside over winter, we suggest you remove all soil, turn the planter upside down onto pressure treated wood strips, and cover it with a tarp. This should prevent moisture from getting into the planter.

## BIRDBATHS, FOUNTAINS, BENCHES & STATUARY

Birdbaths and fountain tops should not be left full of water in the winter since they are likely to freeze and crack. All birdbath and fountain bases, bench legs, and statuary should be raised up off the ground for the winter season to avoid freezing to the ground. Floating bird bath heaters are available if you wish to leave water for wildlife over winter.

## POLYETHYLENE PLANTERS & STATUARY

Polyethylene planters and statuary are resistant to extreme temperature fluctuations. Consult the manufacturer to determine if they can be left outside during the winter months.

## GARDEN PONDS

It is not necessary to drain your garden pond over the winter months, but some preventative maintenance will give you a nice head start come spring. As temperatures start to drop, be sure to remove any twigs, leaves, or other fall debris from your pond. Leaving these items can cause an altered pond pH and briny water requiring a cleaning come spring. If heavy leaf litter is an issue, consider netting your pond. If your pond contains any hardy water plants, snip them back at the crown as the leaves die and lower them to the deepest part of your pond. Non-cold hardy plants, such as tropicals, can be moved into a greenhouse or stored as dormant tubers in a basement. Dispose of any floating plants. If your pond contains a water pump, follow the over winter storage suggestions outlined below in the bubbler section.

## BUBBLER WATER FEATURES

Pond and bubbler water pumps require over winter storage in a heated location to prevent damage that can lead to a costly replacement. November is a good time to pull the pump out of the basin and store it fully submerged in a 5 gallon bucket of water. Store the submerged pump in a garage or basement where it will not freeze. Check periodically to ensure the water level remains high enough and top off the bucket as necessary. If the water becomes stagnant, add a few tablespoons of bleach.

It is not necessary to drain the basin of your bubbler water feature over winter.

Most water features installed by Rice's come with an autofill feature that is tied into your irrigation system. This should be blown out each fall to prevent pipes from rupturing during freezing water expansion. For more information on winterizing your irrigation system, see page 7.

*Rice's is not responsible for any damage due to weather conditions.*

# WINTER CARE

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## TREES & SHRUBS

Winter is a great time for dormant pruning, thinning, shaping, and reducing the size of the plant. Take care when pruning. You should not remove more than  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the tree or shrubs original size. Otherwise you risk potentially stressing the plant. See page 13 of this care guide for more pruning tips.

## EVERGREENS

To protect evergreens from wind burn discoloration and browning, broadleaf evergreens can be sprayed with an anti-desiccant. Or place a burlap barrier on the South and South West sides of the tree. The barrier can be constructed using wooden posts, burlap, staple gun, and twine to create a screen. This will protect the evergreen from damaging winds that can burn the foliage. Please note: Anti-desiccant can cause discoloration on Colorado Spruce.

If your evergreens do have winter burn, wait until mid-spring to prune out the damaged foliage. The evergreen will likely produce growth where you have removed the damage.

## PERENNIALS

Cut back perennials in the fall by trimming off only the brown, dried flower stems, leaves, and stalks to a few inches above the soil and treat with an anti-desiccant spray. You can also mulch over your perennials to help insulate the root zone during the winter months, but this is not necessary. Please note: Some perennials are evergreen and do not die back. Do not trim back green plant material as this may kill the plant.



## PLOWING & SALT

It is recommended you mark pavement edges to help prevent damaging lawns and irrigation systems during snow plowing. You should carefully plan where snow can be pushed and piled to avoid damaging your landscape.

Although salt is naturally occurring and we try to use salt tolerant plants along pavement edges, excessive salt will kill lawn, trees, and plants. It is critical that salt applications are applied carefully and, when necessary, a physical barrier such as a burlap or silt fence be installed to keep salt off sensitive areas.

*Rice's is not be responsible for any plant damage due to salt exposure.*



# RICE'S HISTORY

## THE FUTURE

Rice's future lies in our most valued resource: our people. We will continue to foster value-driven relationships with our clients — executing beyond their expectations with exceptional quality and safety — by nurturing and developing our employees' talents to carry on the decades-long tradition of Rice's Landscapes Redefined.

## 2000s

Steady growth fueled the expansion of the Bradley Tree farm to supplement both the retail garden center and landscape business. At its height, the farm produced over 26 varieties of shade and ornamental trees and numerous container shrubs. Rice's also added mulch and topsoil processing due to popular demand.

## 1980s

Business expanded into commercial landscape maintenance, landscape design, irrigation, snow removal and a small retail nursery. Rice's acquired Willow Springs to make room for further growth and to expand the landscape operations. In 1988, a full-service retail garden center opened when Tom's oldest son, Bryan, joined the business.

## 1960s

Though residential landscaping remained the majority of his business, J.D. expanded to include his first commercial clients in the mid-60s. Steady work allowed him to maintain a small pool of employees including sons Jim and Tom who assisted with the business from the late 50s to the early 60s. Eventually, both sons pursued careers in other fields.

## 1940s

Our roots run deep into the 40s when J.D. Rice, a self-taught landscape hobbyist, left Ohio Power to pursue his passion. He co-founded a short-lived venture called the Zenk-Rice Greenhouse and Nursery, but it dissolved due to an extremely wet spring and health issues. Despite this setback, J.D. continued establishing his fledgling business.



## 2010s

Rice's continued to expand in the commercial landscape/snow and ice management business, while the landscape side turned out award winning work season after season. In 2017, Rice's exited the retail garden center market to focus on their core businesses of landscape maintenance and design/build landscape installation.

## 1990s

With a major boom in residential construction, the business thrived. Tom's second son, Kevin, joined the company to focus on Design/Build Landscapes. The 120 acre Bradley Tree Farm began cultivating shade ornamental B&B trees and container plants, supplying the garden center's expanded offerings and solidifying Rice's reputation as a gardener's destination.

## 1970s

J.D. retired in the early 70s and son, Tom, acquired the property and business assets. While working for Letherman's Seed Company, Tom landscaped on the side. Business flourished due to his keen eye for quality, and his customer and employee driven focus. He soon left the security of his full-time job to pursue his prospering business.

## 1950s

Initially, J.D. focused on shrub and tree plantings, and lawn seeding of newly built post-war homes. As demand grew, he added tractor work — such as garden tilling and brush hogging — along with residential maintenance.

# REFERENCES

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THIS CARE GUIDE IS NOT INTENDED TO BE A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDELINE ON ALL LANDSCAPE SUBJECTS.

If you have any questions, please contact your Designer or Account Manager by calling Rice's Landscapes Redefined at 330-449-9857.

Many online resources are available to assist with specific questions regarding the care of your landscape. Below is a list of some sites you may find helpful:

- [www.buckeyegardening.com](http://www.buckeyegardening.com)
- [www.stark.osu.edu](http://www.stark.osu.edu)/or call 330-832-9856
- [www.garden.org](http://www.garden.org)

There are also several outstanding books on maintaining landscapes. The following are some of the better books we have found:

- The Time/Life Encyclopedia of Gardening Series
- The Ortho Garden Books Series
- The Burpee Gardening Series
- Sunset Books

We suggest you investigate any of these publications at your local library or bookstore for a comprehensive understanding of landscape maintenance.

*Thank you for your business!*



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