

The Latest Dirt

La Porte County Master Gardener Newsletter



JULY 2023

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2023 MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. (DST) on Thursday at Bethany Lutheran Church
102 G Street, La Porte, IN

July 6	Business Meeting
August 3	Picnic/Potluck
September 7	Business Meeting
October 5	Workshop
November 2	Business Meeting Elections
December	Holiday Party

NEXT BOARD MEETING

July 18th - 6:30 p.m.

Location to be determined.

Members are welcome to attend.

"THE LATEST DIRT" is published monthly.

The next deadline is July 20, 2023



www.facebook.com/MasterGardenersOfLaPorteCountyIndiana
www.lpmastergardener.org



PURDUE EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

Watch Out for this Plant - Poison Hemlock!

By: Travis Sams, 103gbfrocks.com

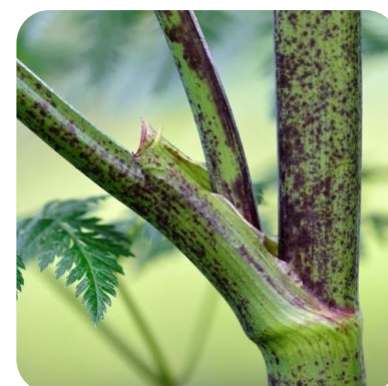
There's an invasive weed that is found throughout Indiana that could be fatal in some cases to humans and animals. If you see it, stay away from it!

This time of year, you will see a lot of flowers and weeds when you are outside. Some are so pretty that you might want to pick them and show them off. However, there are some which you want to avoid at all costs, no matter how pretty they might be.

Read More: [Stay Away From This Deadly Indiana Weed](https://103gbfrocks.com/stay-away-from-this-deadly-indiana-weed/?utm_source=tsmclip&utm_medium=referral) | https://103gbfrocks.com/stay-away-from-this-deadly-indiana-weed/?utm_source=tsmclip&utm_medium=referral

Case in point, Poison Hemlock. Now, the name alone should tell you to stay away. However, it's hard to tell how dangerous it can be if you don't know what you're looking at. Poison Hemlock looks similar to Queen Anne's Lace. It is in the carrot family and can be found in open sunny areas, fields, vacant lots, roadsides, ditches, and many more places all throughout Indiana. One of the easiest ways to spot a

Poison Hemlock and not confuse it with a weed like Queen Anne's Lace is by the purple spots all along the stalk.



What is Poison Hemlock?

To be honest, I had no idea what Poison Hemlock was, but after researching the invasive weed, it would be wise to be on the lookout for them considering [they have been spotted](#) in every county in the state of Indiana.

According to the [Indy Star](#),

Poison hemlock is a biennial plant. In its first year, it puts out a clump of lacy-looking leaves that grow close to the ground. But during the second year, it sends up a flowering stem that can grow as tall as 4-6 feet — and some even taller.

Again, Poison Hemlock is spreading fast throughout Indiana, and can be found along highways, edges of fields, fences, near streams, and in ditches. More recently, they have made their way to public parks, flower beds, and backyard gardens. The main reason why it has been spreading is that each weed can produce up to 30,000 seeds. These seeds ripen between late June and August after it flowers. That makes it prime time for these seeds to fall off and spread.

How Dangerous is Poison Hemlock to Humans and Animals?

Poison Hemlock can harm pets and humans in a few ways. For example, if the sap from the plant gets on your skin, once it is exposed to sunlight it can cause blisters and welts. I don't know about you, but that's not something that I want to deal with this summer. However, that isn't even the worst way Poison Hemlock could hurt you or your pets. If any part of the plant were to be ingested somehow, it could be fatal...as in death! [The Indy Star](#) reports that Poison Hemlock contains "toxic alkaloids that can interfere with nerve transmissions to your muscles, ultimately causing respiratory failure."

Oh, and if you come into contact with Poison Hemlock, it won't take long at all for you to know it. Symptoms could appear in as little as 30 minutes after ingesting or being exposed to the plant. So be on the lookout and keep your pets and children away from any plant that resembles Poison Hemlock.

According to [Purdue University](#), the most effective control may be mowing to prevent seed production, followed by herbicide applications to rosettes and resprouts. It's very important to know about Poison Hemlock. It's not something that you want your kids, pets, or yourself to come into contact with. Knowing about its characteristics will make it easier to identify. I implore you to learn more about this and educate your children as well so none of you have to deal with the potential effects of coming into contact with Poison Hemlock. You can learn more about this deadly invasive weed by [clicking here](#).



ASSOCIATION NEWS

A Visit to Sunset Hills Farm

By: Kathleen Fox

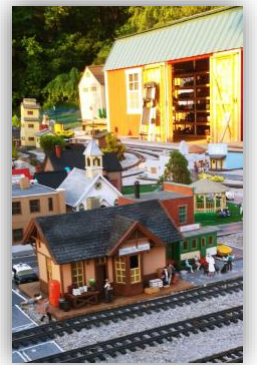
On June 1st the LPCMGA met at Sunset Hills Farm for our first field trip in a long time. We were graciously hosted by fellow Master Gardeners George and Karen Sarver, who shared the fascinating history of the garden railroad currently located at Sunset Hill Farm County Park.

Twenty years ago, the railroad could be seen at Samuelson's nursery. In 2019 plans took shape to relocate the railroad to its present location. Karen described the placement of blocks for the permanent platform, then



the filling with sand, gravel and pipes for drainage. After many hours of volunteer labor and a grant from Porter County Master Gardeners in 2020, the railroad currently has 7 independent tracks, 2 ponds and a waterfall.

Creating and maintaining such a project combines two hobbies: gardening and railroading. Four kinds of gardens are represented: rock gardens, ground cover, trees, and pond. All plants are live and kept in scale with the G-gauge (garden gauge) trains.



George demonstrated how trees are maintained and kept to scale using bonsai techniques, special tools, knowledge and skill learned only through years of experience.

The Illiana Garden Railway Society (IGRS) provided a handout listing all the plants used in the 33' x 75' layout. Thank you, George and Karen, and IGRS for a memorable, educational adventure.

IGRS has a Facebook page, a website and is a 501 (c)(3) educational organization.

2023 La Porte County Master Gardener Grant Recipients

By: Carol Nolan

Here is a brief description of what the grant recipients are doing with our funds. Each of these recipients will give a short presentation at the October Workshop meeting:

Friendship Botanic Gardens –Sensory Garden (1) Presently there are five (5) raised beds boxes representing the five (5) senses. Sensory gardens contain fragrant, colorful and textural plants designed to stimulate the senses. Children explore the gardens by seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling. Proposed to replace perennials as well as add annuals to these boxes. This proposal was granted.

(2) In the past, garden critters have enjoyed the taste box by nibbling away at the taste plants. Efforts have been made to secure the box from animals, but to no avail. Proposed to enclose the 8 ft. x 4 ft box with bird netting held up by five (5) PVC tubes. Ground stakes will secure the netting to the base. Zip ties will secure a fir strip along the top of the netting and tubing to provide stability. One end will provide an open/close access to the plants and labels. This proposal was granted.

Salvation Army of Michigan City – Proposed to offer container gardening class for the third year. This class offers lesson to clients who may not have access to grow a vegetable garden – to teach them to grow fresh produce in any space by using containers. These containers can be something as simple as a plastic bucket. This proposal was granted.

La Porte County Soil and Water Conservation District – Proposed to offset material costs (native wildflower/grasses plugs) associated with the planted Pollinator Enrichment Project. This environmental education project is to be located within the existing “pollinator power garden” space fronting the La Porte County Purdue Extension/SWC/Solid Waste Offices.

Copies of these grant requests will be available at the general business meeting July 6, 2023 and will be on file at the extension office.

Pioneer Land School Tours

By: Kathleen Fox

The LPCMGA looks forward to participating in the annual Pioneer Land School Tours. This year was no exception.



Every weekday for two weeks in May the Pioneer Village hosts all day field trips for 4th graders from elementary schools in La Porte and surrounding counties. The students come by bus to the village. They spend the day experiencing and learning about pioneer life in the mid 1800s.

Their day starts in the Pioneer Garden where master gardeners, dressed in period garb, volunteer to teach the curious, attentive 4th traders what a pioneer garden looks like and why it is crucial to the Pioneers' existence.

This spring saw about 650 students come through. LPCMGA can be proud of the education and enthusiasm shared by our volunteers, some of whom were "first timers". Now we look forward to hosting the public during the La Porte County Fair.



Pioneer Garden

By: Mary Davis



The Pioneer Garden is looking good in anticipation of the La Porte County Fair. Here is a swallowtail caterpillar on the fennel.



July 6th Business Meeting - Bethany Lutheran Church

The July business meeting will be called to order at 6:30 p.m. after a brief social hour beginning at 6:00 p.m.

We will have the treasurer's report and a discussion of the last meeting's visit to Sunset Park in Valpo to view the garden railroad set up. Old business will be discussed followed by new business.

New business will consist of many things including the August picnic at Red Mill Park and our newest intern will be introduced as well.

If time allows, we will have open discussion for things on your mind as well as gardening questions. A full agenda will be available at the meeting. Also, the July meeting is the last opportunity to turn in your survey.

Thank you.

Project Coordinators

By: Carol Nolan

Now that we are well into the busy time of our volunteer opportunities, it is important that all Project Coordinators attend the next several business meetings and provide an update on our projects.

Please be prepared to discuss these projects at the July 6th business meeting. Just a quick update is all that is needed.

Thank you.



2023 EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT	CAROL NOLAN
VICE PRESIDENT	KATHLEEN FOX
CO-SECRETARIES	ANN KLOSINSKI STEVE ZOLVINSKI
TREASURER	SUSAN KIEFFER
ED. COMMITTEE/ SPEAKERS BUREAU	EUNICE CONWAY JOAN KINTZELE DEB SARVER
PAST PRESIDENT	RANDA MAGILL

2023 PROJECT COORDINATORS

Brown Bag Gardening Series

OPEN _____

Farmers' Market – La Porte

Carol Nolan _____ 331-903-0091
 _____ **cnolan41@yahoo.com**

Garden Hotline

Extension Office _____ 219-324-9407

Habitat for Humanity

OPEN

Friendship Botanic Gardens

Rima Binder _____ 219-878-8128
 _____ **rimabinder@comcast.net**

Pioneer Land School Tours

Linda Hough _____ 219-324-0424
 _____ **ljhough614@gmail.com**

Pioneer Heritage Garden

Connie Shei _____ 219-362-4866
 _____ **jshei@comcast.net**

Seed Savers

Mary Davis _____ 219-877-5339
 _____ **mdavis9757@gmail.com**

Sunflower Fair

Linda Hough _____ 219-324-0424
 _____ **ljhough614@gmail.com**

Garden Show

Carol Nolan _____ (331) 903-0091
 _____ **cnolan41@yahoo.com**

EXTENSION NEWS

Purdue Extension Porter/La Porte County Master Gardener Training Program

Purdue Extension is now accepting applications for the Fall Purdue Extension Master Gardener's Training Program.

If gardening is your passion, then the Purdue Extension Master Gardener program may be something you would enjoy.

The classes will be held on Wednesdays starting on August 30, 2023 and ending on December 6, 2023. The class will be held in the afternoon from 1 pm to 4 pm central time. The location is the Purdue Northwest Campus in Westville, IN. The cost for the class is \$200. Applications are due August 1, 2023.

The class will cover core topics such as: weed identification and control, plant science, soils and plant nutrition, plant diseases and diagnosis, woody ornamentals, herbaceous ornamentals, insect identification and control, vegetable and fruit gardening, pesticides safety and alternatives, lawn care, animal pests and invasive species.

All gardeners are welcome. The number of participants is limited and on a first come, first served basis. By successfully completing the Purdue Extension Master Gardener Training Program, you have an opportunity to join your local Master Gardener Association. This association is a community of volunteers who work to help others grow better gardens.

For further details call the Purdue Extension Office at 219-465-3555 or email brow2274@purdue.edu.

PURDUE EXTENSION - PORTER COUNTY
155 Indiana Avenue, Ste #301
Valparaiso, IN 46383

Office: 219-465-3555 Purdue University is an Affirmative Action
/ Equal Opportunity Institution



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

New volunteer opportunities have been added to the Extension Master Gardener site.

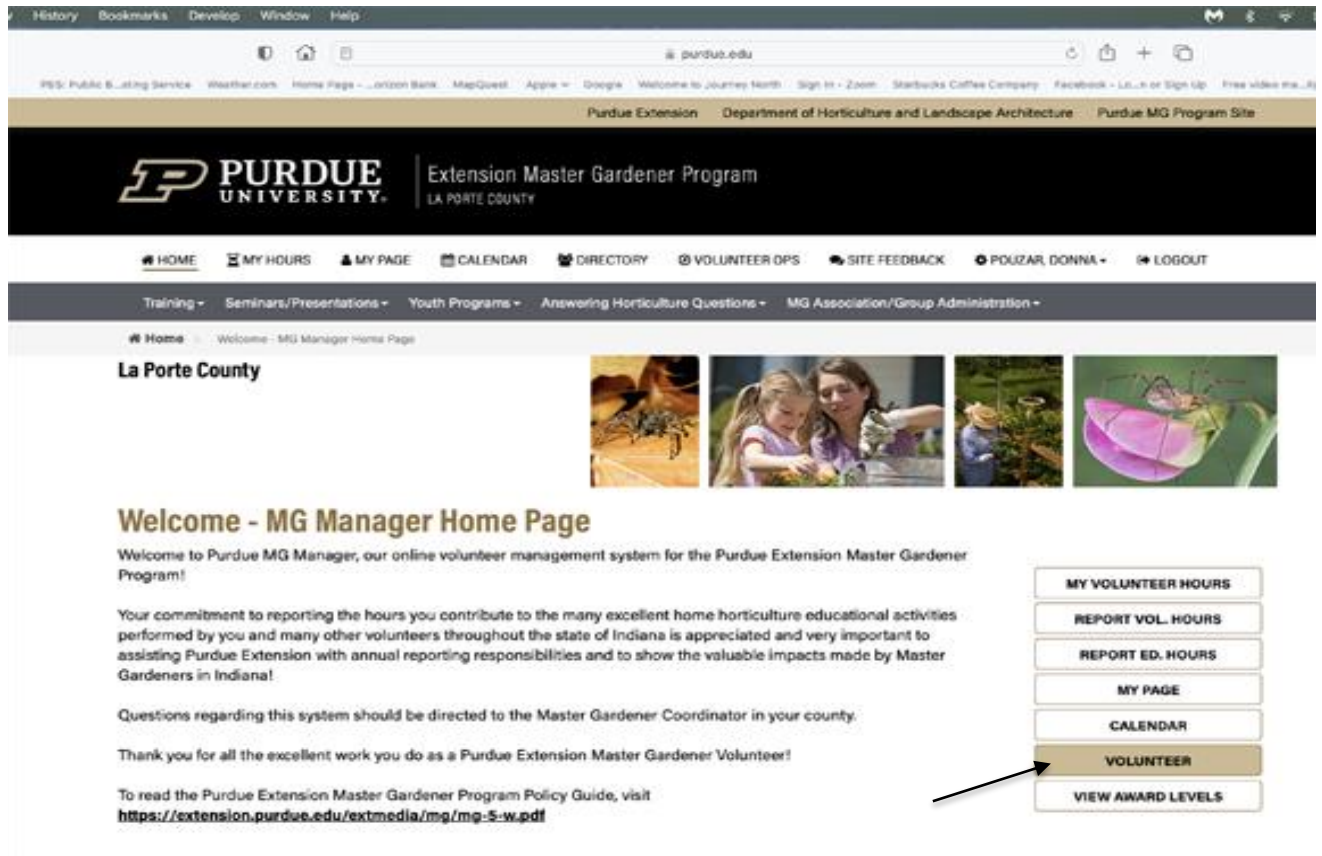
By: Kathy Ulman

Hotline – April thru September

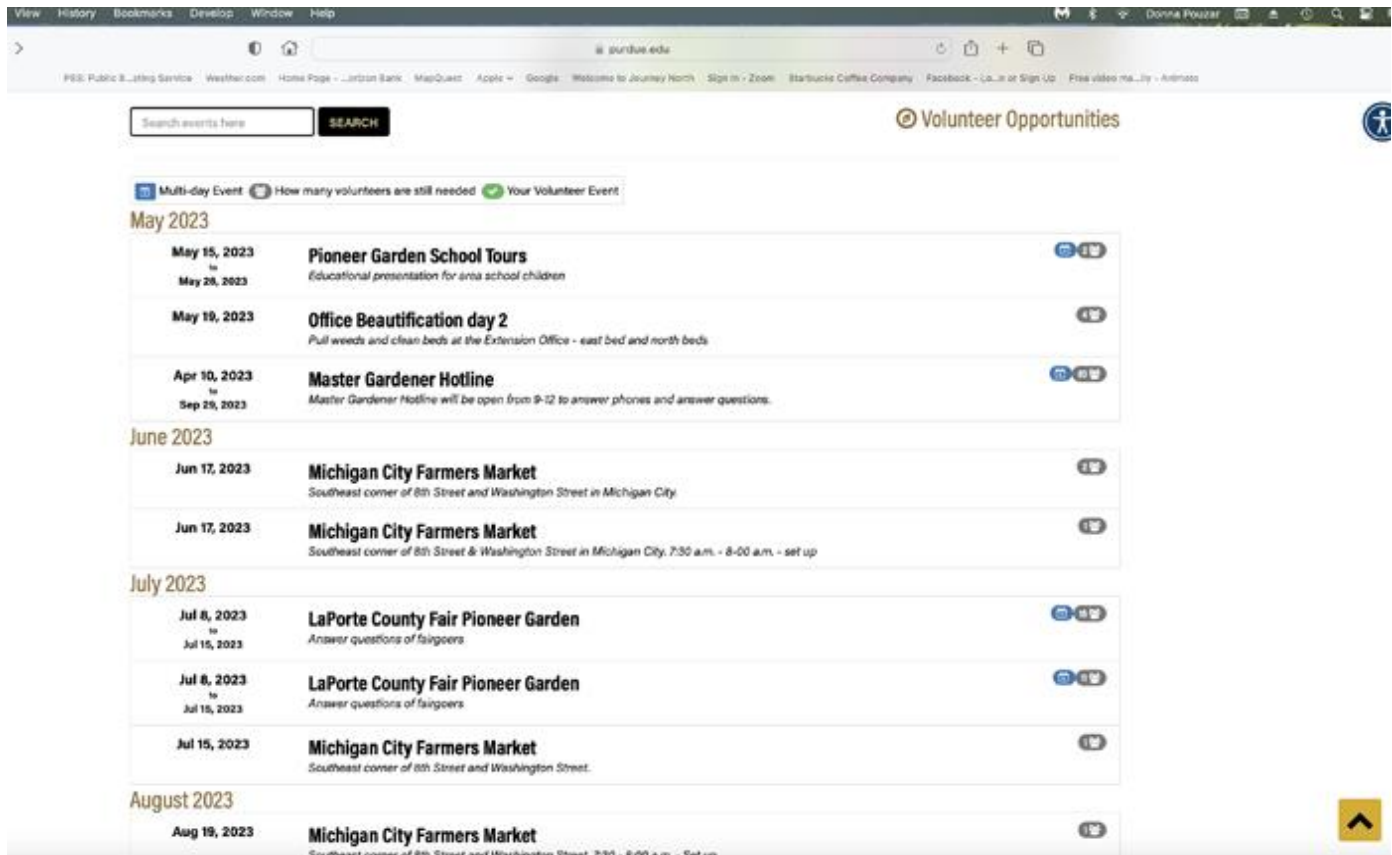
La Porte County Fair Pioneer Garden - 12:00 -3:00 p.m.; 3:00-6:00 p.m.

July 8 – July 15

In the event you are having problems locating the Volunteer Opportunities option on MG Manager, below are some instructions on how to access this. After you log on to MG Manager, the next screen you will see offers several options. What you want to do is select “Volunteer” as shown below:



After you click on 'Volunteer,' the next screen will appear:



At this point, you can click on any of the volunteer opportunities to sign up and you will see who else has volunteered for that particular event. If you have questions, please contact Kathy Ulman at the office and she will be happy to help you.

HOT LINE

By: Carol Nolan

I will be manning the **Hot Line** on Mondays beginning June 12. If any member needs extra training and feels more comfortable volunteering with an experienced MG, please sign up for the following available Mondays. You can do so by logging into MG Manager or by calling the Extension Office and asking Kathy Ulman to reserve the day/days you prefer.

July 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31

August 7, 14, 21, and 28

September 11, 18, and 25

Farmers' Market – Michigan City

By: Carol Nolan

Also, the Michigan City **Farmers Market** is now on the MG Manager calendar. I have signed up for each week for the 7:30 to 10 slot to set up. I will be back around noon each session to assist with tear down as well. If you want to sign up, below are the dates we are scheduled to be there:

July 15
 August 19
 September 16
 October 21

Each volunteer can sign up for a minimum of 2 hours or the full 4 hours, your choice. Starting time is 8 a.m. and closing is 12 p.m. I will bring the canopy, weights, table, and chairs. Those who sign up for 8:00 a.m. slots should be there around 7:30 to help set up. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

JULY GARDEN

HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- Closely watch houseplants that have been set outdoors. They need more water than they did indoors. They can dry out rapidly in hot, summer breezes.
- Propagate houseplants by taking cuttings from vigorously growing plants. Place the cut end in rooting media (such as perlite, vermiculite, or peat moss soil mix). Enclose in plastic and keep out of direct sunlight.

GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables, and small fruits)

- Supplement natural rainfall, if any, to supply 1 to 1.5 inches of water per week in a single application.
- Start seeds of broccoli, cabbage, and Brussels sprouts to transplant later for a fall harvest.
- Harvest crops such as tomatoes, squash, okra, peppers, beans, and cucumbers frequently to encourage further production.
- Complete succession planting of bush beans and sweet corn.
- Harvest summer squash while small and tender for best quality.

STANDING COMMITTEE

COORDINATORS

History Book _____ Donna Pouzar
 Hospitality _____ Eunice Conway
 Librarian _____ Linda Hough
 Newsletter _____ Donna Pouzar
 Speakers Bureau _ See Executive Board
 Sunshine _____ Julie Goetz

Purdue Extension Office __ 324-9407

Interim ANR-Porter County
 Nikky Witkowski _____ 219-465-3555
nikky@purdue.edu

Interim ANR-La Porte County
 Mary Komenas _____ 219-324-9407
mfoell@purdue.edu

The Latest Dirt is published monthly. The deadline for submission is the 20th of each month. Our mission is to publish articles and events of interest to other Master Gardeners and the community. Articles about personal experiences, suggestions on gardening books, catalogs, helpful websites, tips and tricks, book reviews, seminars you've attended are welcomed.

Submission requirements: Articles should be no longer than a page and can include photos. References must be included. Latin names of plants should be italicized. We do not accept articles pertaining to medicinal information. Master Gardeners will get volunteer hours for time spent working on an article.

**Have a garden item for sale or trade?
 Buy, Sell, Trade at the
 Trading Shed**

Place your free ad in The Latest Dirt.

Tools, tillers, mowers, plants - anything garden related. Keep ads brief and provide your phone number and/or e-mail address.

Ads will be limited to space available.

Send ads, photos, events or articles by the 20th of the month to:

pouzdlp@icloud.com

PURDUE UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL
 OPPORTUNITY/EQUAL ACCESS/AFFIRMATIVE
 ACTION INSTITUTION

- Standard sweet corn is at its peak for only a day or so. Supersweet corn varieties maintain their peak quality for a longer period. Harvest when silks begin to dry and kernels exude a milky, rather than watery or doughy, juice when punctured.
- Broccoli will form edible side shoots after the main head is removed.
- Mulch garden to control weeds and conserve soil moisture.
- Make sure potato tubers, carrot shoulders, and onion bulbs are covered with soil to prevent them from developing a green color and off flavors. Applying a layer of mulch will help keep them covered.
- Allow blossoms on newly planted everbearing strawberry plants to develop for a fall crop.
- July is a good time to fertilize strawberries with 0.5 pound of actual nitrogen per 100 feet of row.
- Harvest raspberries when fully colored and easily separated from stem. After harvest is complete, prune out the fruiting canes to make room for new growth.
- Remove faded blossoms from annual and perennial flowers to prevent seeds from forming.
- Condition flowers cut from the garden for arranging by removing the lower leaves, placing cut stem ends in warm water, and storing them overnight in a cool location.
- The foliage of spring-flowering bulbs can be removed safely after it fades. This also is a good time to lift the bulbs for transplanting or propagation.

YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals, and fruits)

- Keep newly established plants watered during dry weather. Allow water to penetrate deeply into soil rather than sprinkling frequently and lightly.
- Apply mulch around young plants to help conserve soil moisture and control weeds.
- Do not plant bare-root or ball-and-burlap stock at this time of year. Container-grown plants still may be planted, but only if you can keep them well watered.
- Continue a fruit tree spray program to keep diseases and insects under control.
- Remove water sprouts (sprouts from the trunk) and suckers (sprouts from the roots) from fruit trees.
- For those fortunate fruit tree growers who have a good crop this year, prop up tree branches that are heavily loaded with fruit.
- Pinch off faded rose blossoms. Continue rose spray program to control insects and diseases.
- Many Indiana trees are plagued by “lawnmower blight.” Be careful to avoid nicking tree trunks while mowing.
- When watering lawns, apply 1 to 1.5 inches of water in a single application per week. Frequent, light sprinklings will encourage roots to stay shallow, making them more susceptible to drought.
- Bluegrass is a cool-season plant and is under great stress during hot, dry summers. If water is not applied, the bluegrass will become dormant and will turn brown, until more favorable conditions arrive in autumn. For extreme dry conditions, rescue watering is required to keep the plants alive, while still dormant. Apply one-half inch of water every 2-4 weeks.
- Mow grass one-half inch higher than usual during the dry, summer months to help conserve soil moisture. Do not mow when the lawn is under severe drought stress.
- No need to remove clippings from the lawn unless grass is excessively tall or weedy. Clippings return some nutrients to the soil and do not add to thatch buildup.