



# the Hedgelines



October 2022

**In this Issue:**

- Hurricane Ian Post Cleanup
- Managing the Effects of Wet Weather in the Landscape
- Prepare for the Future of Water Pricing
- Trees in Parking lots
- Do Perennials need a Fall trimming?
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- Landscaping with Reclaimed Water
- Property Spotlight: The Preserve at Charlotte Harbor
- Good Dirt: October Landscaping Tips



The LMP Business Resiliency Plan provides our clients and internal departments with a contingency and backup resource structure to ensure the continuity of critical business operations. Proactive reaction to Hurricane Ian will be in place to keep your operation intact.

Communication during a disaster is critical, but sometimes our means of communication can get disrupted during severe weather. Let your Account Manager know if you have alternate contact information that may help us reach you post-hurricane.

LMP will adjust resources post-Hurricane and work at client properties promptly and efficiently to reduce or eliminate impacts on your business operations. Resources will be aligned and dispatched upon the all-clear from the local authorities, and we will reduce our standard Production Schedule to minimal needs during post-hurricane emergency cleanup.

- Remove debris and obstructions from roadways allowing for safe vehicle access
- Remove debris from sidewalks and walkways
- Notify Property Manager of any hazardous areas
- Analyze any failing or leaning tree risks and act accordingly
- Trim broken and hanging branches
- Debris cleanup and disposal from grounds and common areas
- Resume irrigation schedule or adjust if grounds have flooded
- Assess damage to plant materials and salvage when possible



Our staff is trained in the cleanup of hurricane storm damage and knows the options available, along with the best or most cost-effective method of restoring your property to a usable condition.

Hopefully, storm cleanup and debris removal are the worst of your worries after the hurricane. Our disaster response crews quickly and efficiently take care of your urgent cleanup and removal needs when there is no time to wait. We are ready and equipped for any type of cleanup project.



# Managing the Effects of Wet Weather in the Landscape

Just as insufficient water can be detrimental to our gardens, so can too much of it. Standing water in the garden can lead to erosion, waterlogged plants, increased pests, disease, and weeds, and decreased nutrients.

While we can't predict the weather, we can prepare ourselves if Mother Nature forgets to turn off the hose.

Rain brings needed moisture but can also cause problems in the landscape.

Heavy rains can damage tender plants, wash away mulch, and erode soil from around plant roots. Injured or dead plant parts should be pruned immediately after a storm to allow the plant to recover.

Too much rain and our warm summer temperatures create an ideal environment for bacterial and fungal problems.

Monitor your plants for signs of disease — spots or other discoloration on foliage, as well as rotting or wilting of stems, fruit, or even the whole plant. Turfgrass is susceptible to fungal issues like leaf spot and take-all root rot. Powdery mildew on many plants can become a problem after weeks of rain.

Since we can't control the weather, the best we can do is be proactive, keeping an eye out for problems. Keep fallen leaves and other debris clear to avoid spreading disease.

## Soil Composition

Our soils tend to be sandy, allowing better percolation of water. Heavy rains can saturate soil that can't absorb additional water resulting in increased flooding, erosion, and runoff. When soils become saturated from heavy rainfall, loss of nitrogen (N) becomes a significant concern, affecting the soil pH.

Grass needs sunlight, water, air, and nutrients to grow. When your turf is submerged, the grass cannot get the CO<sup>2</sup> it needs. It can survive this way for a day or two, but the chances of survival drop significantly after four or five days.



## Fungus and Diseases

Fungus thrives in wet conditions above and below the soil surface, growing on wet leaves while attacking roots. Although the upper plant parts can deal with rainy periods pretty well, the roots are where most problems occur.

Gray leaf spot can infect the blades of St. Augustine grass when sitting in water. Take-all root rot attacks stressed lawn turf that destroys turf root systems over weeks leading to yellowing and irregular brown patches.

Bacteria thrive in moist, and the dense foliage of shrubs can be a perfect environment to trap water. Look for any leaves with signs of disease, like dark-colored spots or light, powdery fungus, and remove affected leaves. Also, dispose of wilting or rotting stems and fruit or fallen debris.

## Avoid Walking on Water-Soaked Soil

Not only will trudging through a swampy lawn ruin can also damage your landscape. When you walk in a water-soaked area, your weight compacts the soil. This limits the air pockets in the soil, making it hard for plants to get the oxygen they need to stay healthy. Furthermore, your soil will dry and become challenging when the spring showers finally end.

We never really know what the season will bring us! But being aware of these tips can help your garden continue to thrive even if it got a little more water than planned.

## PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE OF WATER PRICING

One-third of the U.S. now pays more for water than electricity. Water rates are continuing to rise, and water is generally a top operation cost.

The cost of water is rising faster than all other utility costs, and those rates will continue to rise to pay for infrastructure improvements.

A smart irrigation controller can help you get ahead of the water cost curve and help the planet by conserving your water resources.

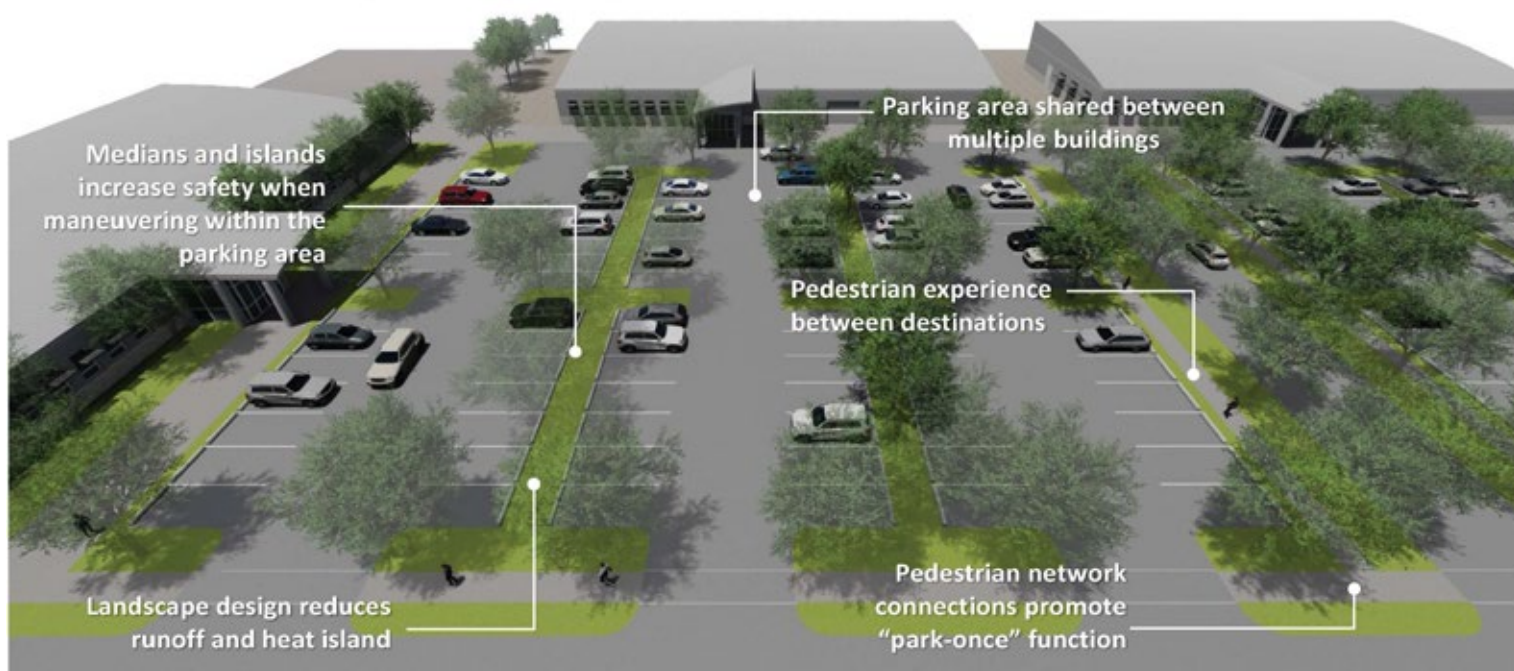
# Trees in Parking Lots

Although a parking lot is unsightly in its basic form and can be a rugged environment for landscaping, there are intelligent commercial landscaping solutions that you can implement to turn these spots into focal points. Landscaping in and around parking lots and pavement improves appearance, prevents soil erosion, and reduces carbon dioxide through photosynthesis. Trees also require less maintenance than shrubs, collect less trash, and create better air quality. They not only screen and provide shade for cars but also guide traffic and frame views.

*The key to enhancing parking lots is to keep the landscape simple, practical, and sustainable.*

But just because a tree can provide a little shade in the parking lot doesn't mean it's the perfect tree for a paved parking lot. Paved surfaces are engineered to shed water, which means that the pavement will likely shed water in directions that will deprive your trees of soil moisture and potentially leave their roots submerged in excess water. This may be good for the parking lot, but not every type of tree can handle the less-than-ideal living arrangements of a parking lot island.

The stress of compaction and low soil fertility, coupled with other physical, environmental, and human forces acting against trees, make parking lots and paved areas a bit unfriendly to trees. There is an exciting variety of small maturing trees for urban plantings; although smaller, they still provide some shade benefits and cause less damage to the hardscape. The golden rule is to match the ultimate tree size to the size of the planting space. Installing trees with one dominant leader and one trunk



The root vs. pavement conflict is one of the most pervasive problems in urban landscaping; selecting the appropriate tree species is vital. The perfect parking lot trees provide shade and beauty and give a sense of security or privacy as needed. They will reduce noise pollution, minimize drainage issues, and even help reduce the carbon footprint you leave behind by creating oxygen. It is essential to avoid trees with large surface roots that may damage curbs, sidewalks, and pavement. A tree with a dense canopy will block light penetration to the pavement, preventing rapid evaporation of precipitation. It is also essential to consider if the tree will litter the pavement with fruit, branches, and large leaves.

in parking lots makes it easier to remove lower branches as they get in the way of the signs. Some options may be to use Green Ash, Sweet bay Magnolia, Shumard oak, Red Maple and White Geiger Tree. All of these are smaller trees, single trunk and grow with a higher foliage canopy, allowing for traffic underneath.

While landscaping your commercial parking lot might seem like a secondary need, a well-manicured green space can considerably impact your business. Trees' initial cost may be more than a shrub, but the long-term benefits include properties with trees carry a higher value. Customers don't spend much time in the parking lot, but the state of your outdoor space will likely leave a lasting impression on everyone who uses it, conscious or not.

# Do your Perennials need a Fall Trimming?



October is a perfect time to start preparing your landscape for the upcoming cooler months. Fall trimming prevents diseases and pest infestations, making room for new growth and preparing your landscape for its dormant winter.

Now is the time to get an early start on dealing with insect and disease issues in the landscape, especially after all the rain we have had. Focusing on prevention rather than reacting to a disease and pest infestation when it happens makes for a healthy landscape come Spring.

Trimming off the areas of a plant that gets a fungus or suffers from a pest infestation is best because these areas are weaker and more susceptible to attracting pests. A little trimming goes a long way by helping prevent infestation by removing these diseased, dying limbs and leaving behind strong ones that are resilient against disease and infestation.



## Your Landscape Benefits from Optimal Nutrient Access

Trimming your landscape plants keeps them shapely and at a perfect size to receive optimal nutrition. Landscape trimming is essential to ensuring your plants stay healthy and receive the nutrients they need to thrive and sustain themselves throughout the winter. A tree or other plant that is too large and contains dead or dying limbs cannot benefit from nutrients as much as a healthy, trimmed plant. Dying and diseased branches compete with the rest of the plant and steal nutrients from it in a last-ditch effort for themselves. Rather than feeding your plants' lively, healthy parts, nutrients like fertilizer, water, food, and light get split between the healthy and dying limbs. When this happens, the rest of your plant suffers. Trimming these branches off will drastically increase your plant's health and reduce waste.

## Trimming Encourages & Makes Room for New Growth

Overgrown landscapes that don't receive proper trimming tend to decrease in growth as time goes on. Cutting off dead branches and flower heads makes room for new growth when Spring returns.

You may wonder whether you cut back on perennials in the Fall or Spring. The time to prune perennials depends on the type of plant you have and its health. Some perennials benefit from fall trimming and pruning to keep their forms shapely and encourage new growth; getting the timing right is tricky. But before you prune, know what type of plant you're working with, and understand how it grows.

If you are curious about whether to prune a specific plant, get in touch to chat with one of our arborists to see if it would be a benefit.

# The Very Hungry Caterpillar



The oleander caterpillar is a year-round resident and pest in our landscapes and, if left untreated, can cause significant damage to plants. Oleander caterpillars hatch from eggs that have been laid under plant leaves. The caterpillars got their name because they prefer to feed on Oleander leaves, but don't let the name fool you because they can and will eat other plant material, like the Desert Rose or Mandeville Vine.

Oleander caterpillar damage is easy to recognize, as oleanders eat the tender leaf tissue, leaving the veins intact. While oleander caterpillar damage rarely kills the host plant, it defoliates the oleander and gives the leaves a skeleton-like appearance if not controlled.

As an adult moth, the Oleander caterpillar is a colorful, wasp-like creatures are a dazzling shade of iridescent blue-green and have a distinctive orange spot on the tail end of the abdomen. The adult stage lasts a little less than a week, but in this short time period, the female moth lays several clusters of yellow or cream-colored eggs. These are found on the undersides of leaves. The eggs may hatch in as few as two days, or it may take nearly a week. They stay together in groups and make short work of the greenery, leaving only the veins behind. When they have reached full size, the caterpillars find a safe hiding place in tree bark or sheltered areas of buildings, such as eaves. They spin a cocoon and pupate, emerging shortly as Polka-Dot Moth-Wasps.



## How to Get Rid of Oleander Caterpillars

Pick the caterpillars off by hand and drop them in a bucket of soapy water. If the infestation is severe, clip heavily infested leaves and drop them into a plastic garbage bag. Dispose of the infested plant matter carefully to prevent the spread of the insects. If all else fails, spray the oleander bush with *Bacillus thuringiensis*, a natural bacteria that poses no risk to beneficial insects. Chemicals should always be a last resort, as pesticides kill beneficial insects along with the oleander plant caterpillars, creating even larger infestations with no natural enemies to keep the pests in check.

## Are Oleander Caterpillars Poisonous to Humans?

Touching oleander caterpillars can result in an itchy, painful skin rash, and touching the eyes after contact with the caterpillar can cause inflammation and sensitivity.

# Landscaping with Reclaimed Water

By law, homeowners may use reclaimed water to irrigate the lawn and landscape. Regulated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, reclaimed water is a safe alternative water supply to supplement residential irrigation. It is distributed via "purple" colored pipe and sprinkler devices and supplied through a water meter separate from the domestic potable supply.

Reclaimed water can safely irrigate turf and most other landscape plants. Reclaimed water often contains nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) that can be considered part of the fertilizer needs of the landscape.

The level of wastewater treatment required to remove all dissolved salts or nutrients from reclaimed water is not economically feasible nor a primary goal for wastewater treatment operators. Yet, it is helpful to know the nutrient and salinity concentrations in reclaimed water, especially if homeowners are experiencing plant loss or decline or are maintaining a routine fertilizer schedule.

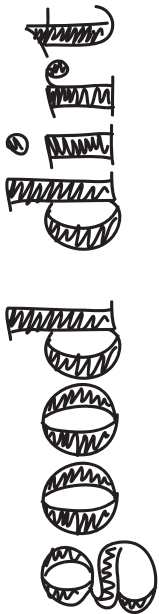


# Property Spotlight



The Preserve at Charlotte Harbor is nestled along Florida's lush, picturesque Southwest Gulf Coast, between Sarasota and Ft. Myers in Charlotte Harbor. Conveniently located in Port Charlotte on Charlotte Harbor just off Highway 41. It is minutes from I-75, Fisherman's Village in Punta Gorda, hospitals, beaches and more.

Friendly gated community with well-run HOA board and very well-maintained. Resort-like amenities include large clubhouse with fitness center, in-ground heated pool, separate spa & putting green. The grounds offer lush, tropical landscaping that create the feeling of a tropical oasis. It's a great location minutes from Charlotte Harbor, boating, fishing and historic downtown Punta Gorda.



## PRUNING

Leave ornamental grasses alone so you can enjoy their feathery seed heads. It is best to wait until early spring to prune grasses.

## SUSTAINABILITY

Price out the cost of replacing high maintenance plants with ones that will thrive on their own.

Consider increasing the number of plants in each bed to reduce the area of exposed soil which will help with weed control.

## SEASONAL COLOR

If you like to grow annuals from seed, October is the month to sow them. Popular annuals to grow from seed include pansies, dianthus, snapdragons, and petunias.

If you have poinsettia plants that you have carried over from last year, pinch back new growth to make the plants bush out until November. Then you will need to stop because they will begin forming the colorful bracts and flowers as the days shorten.



### Sarasota

(941) 556-9404

Serving: Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee, Manatee, Sarasota

### Tampa

(813) 757-6500

Serving: Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk

### Wesley Chapel

(813) 406-4465

Serving: Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas