

Landscape kit for watering trees, shrubs and plantings

An underground watering system so easy to install that any do-it-yourselfer can do it... and without specialized tools? That's part of the appeal of a new landscape watering kit being introduced by True Temper. The unusual system is simple enough for any do-it-yourselfer to install... and, once installed, enables the do-it-yourselfer to water trees, shrubs and plantings automatically, without being on the scene.

In flower and vegetable gardens, as well as patio plants, slow-drip is considered the best watering method. The system allows delivery of water at a slower rate, in a form that meets specific plant needs.

The landscape kit features tubing connectors that are quick and easy to assemble, and sprayer heads with specially barbed risers that create their own hole in the tubing.

They save installation time, and ensure a secure and watertight fit. The entire system can be installed without specialized tools.

The kit comes with everything needed

to water up to 500 square feet of landscaping — enough to water trees, shrubs and flower plantings in two or three areas of the average home landscape.

Included are 80 feet of half-inch UV resistant, low density poly tubing used to carry water underground from an outside faucet to the risers which connect into spray heads; 20 self-tapping risers; 12 half-circle spray heads; and 12 full-circle spray heads.

The kit also includes a tap connector with filter screen to catch sediment and prevent blockage of the small water outlets; a flow regulator that reduces water volume to correct level; two hose closures for sealing end of tubing; two barbed T-connectors for in-line connection of tubing to branch attachments; two barbed L-connectors for end-line connections; and four barbed "goof" plugs for changing the tubing once it has been installed.

According to the manufacturer, the new irrigation system is quick and easy to assemble, designed to meet any gardener's needs, and saves time and money.

Developing good consumer habits makes buying lawn and garden, outdoor power equipment easier

Trimmers, power blowers, hedge clippers, chain saws and other outdoor power equipment can make lawn and garden care much easier. But they can also cause headaches.

The engine won't start. It worked just fine before you stored it for the winter, but now it's making a funny noise. Malfunctioning equipment can cause aggravation and accidents. And then there may be the inconvenience and expense of repairing or replacing units.

Inferior equipment certainly is one cause of potential problems; misuse, improper storage, and inadequate maintenance are others. What's a gardener to do?

Fortunately, there is a solution: Become a good consumer. If you know how to shop for quality equipment and good service, you can make wise purchases in the first place, and know what to do when (or before) something goes wrong.

Shopping for the right dealer is at least as important as looking for the right equipment. Naturally, it helps to choose a sturdy, well-manufactured piece of equipment with a good "track record" for longevity.

Cheap equipment is often just that, but price alone will not tell you what you need to know about the product's quality.

That's the dealer's job. Comparison shop — not only to see what equipment models and prices are available, but to see how you are treated by different sales staffs.

A good salesperson isn't just interested in selling something. He or she should care about you, not just the sales figures.

Look for salespeople who are willing and able to explain and compare product features. Explain what uses you have in mind — does the salesperson then point

out specific models and features that will be most appropriate for you?

If you need versatility for specialized uses, does the salesperson suggest accessories or special features that are appropriate?

Look for a dealer that services and sells an entire line of outdoor power equipment. Echo, Incorporated, for example, offers a complete line of chain saws, weed and grass trimmers, brush cutters, hedge trimmers, power blowers, generators, water pumps, and a complete line of attachments and accessories.

Both light and heavyweight products are available for a wide range of homeowner and commercial uses.

Good salespeople are happy, even eager, to demonstrate the power equipment or have you try using it. Using the equipment yourself is the best way to find out whether a mower engine is hard to start, a saw is too heavy for you, or a blower really can move autumn leaves without disturbing your favorite plants. Some dealers will even let you borrow a demonstration model to try at home.

If you experience a product's performance before you buy, you're less likely to regret your purchase later. Salespeople should encourage your research.

Another thing to notice is the dealer's service facilities. Will you be able to get fast, reliable service? Is the dealership proud of its service facilities, mentioning them as an asset? Do the mechanics seem knowledgeable and willing to answer your questions?

Dealers who assume their job stops after you've paid for your new machine are "fair weather friends," whereas a dealer who is willing to service products well can make life much easier at repair and maintenance time.

Speaking of maintenance, how infor-

mative is the dealer about what you need to do to keep your equipment in good working order?

Few consumers are skilled mechanics; dealers who realize this provide instruction in assembling, using, and caring for the power equipment they sell.

Insist on learning about how to change blades, string or chain, add fuel and oil, store the product, and when to bring it in for routine maintenance.

Better yet, find a dealer who doesn't make you insist. Good ones will give you one-to-one instruction and/or offer classes in maintenance and safety.

If a dealer says "read the manual" when you ask about safety precautions or maintenance procedures, it's time to shop somewhere else.

A responsible dealer makes absolutely sure that you know how to handle the product, use ear and eye protection, and store equipment safely.

Buying a reliable, well-made product from a dealer who is willing to go an extra mile or two to satisfy you is the way to avoid power equipment blues.

After all, power equipment is supposed to be a help in your garden and lawn work. Make sure you don't get less than you deserve.

For more fun, "lightscape" as well as landscape your outdoor areas

"Lightscape" your garden, patio, porch or deck. It will enhance your garden after dark and even create an extra room for playing, relaxing and entertaining after the sun goes down.

Around a pool, hot tub or sauna, lighting will provide an outdoor spa useful all hours of the day.

Spot and floodlights will make a garden come alive at night and provide a charm very different from its daytime

beauty.

An extra outdoor dining room can be created with an umbrella table on the patio, or a barbecue area centered around a small stone or brick fireplace.

Provide good visibility, without harshness, in the table area, and transitional lighting on the fringes, so there is no abrupt change from the intimate eating space to the darkness beyond.

SALTY TRICK

To control slugs in the garden, try the "beer-in-a-pie-plate-rimmed-with-salt" trick, says Horticulturist Ruth Friendship-Keller of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food's rural-organizations and services branch.

The beer will attract the slugs and as they crawl over the rim of the pie plate, the salt will dehydrate them.

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