

# Town Gardener

## Roses should be constantly inspected

By TOM CAVAN

Roses are ornamental favorites, but perfection comes only through consistent inspection. A good rose grower will go out of his or her way to catch another glimpse.

Having read Part 1 last week, and with that gentle bed planted, look your plants inside out as often as you can. Major problems start small and early awareness will make your problem solving easier. You will also conserve your spray which translates into dollars saved and environmental safety.

Roses require large amounts of water when hot, dry weather prevails. Never water roses with a sprinkler, especially late in the day and at night. Powdery mildew will become the first act in your play of problems. Water applied below the foliage will aid in keeping your plant disease free.

But what about when it rains? Mother Nature must be human;

she makes mistakes. Many disease problems on roses require little more than water and 60°F.

If you do notice a problem and cannot identify it, you should seek experienced help. Clip a piece of infected foliage and leaf area which is partly healthy but with infection starting. Place it in a plastic bag (it's bad manners to spread your problems around). A trained eye will recognize the problem infecting the plant and will recommend the spray control needed to treat it.

Listing names of diseases and describing them would leave me old and gray before I finished. There are many publications in all price ranges with effective photographs and facts.

Insects must consider any flowering plant fair game. Roses are the queen of flowers, and attendance on them has McDonald's beat. One female aphid is capable of producing thousands of offspring in one

season. So a constant watch will reveal early signs of a few on the new shoots and flower parts, especially when the buds are tight. If you're patient, watch a minute and you may witness their romance dance.

Mulching will help retain moisture and promote deeper root growth. It also helps insulate

from heat stress. I would recommend an application of benomyl on the mulch when spraying your roses. One application is all that will be required unless late season conditions require a last call for problems.

For more information call the Town Gardener Hotline at 519-833-2117.

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